COMIC SHOP NEWS™

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Cadillacs & Dinosaurs ™&©1993 Mark Schultz, ARR.

Kitchen Sink Makes It Easier to Own *Cadillacs & Dinosaurs*

On a budget? Can't afford expensive back issues? Don't worry: Kitchen Sink can put you in a ***Cadillacs & Dinosaurs*** that you can afford!

It may sound a lot like an auto dealership advertisement, but it's essentially true: Kitchen Sink is ensuring that fans who want to enjoy the ***Cadillacs & Dinosaurs*** storyline without paying back-issue prices can do so.

Cadillacs & Dinosaurs is the trade paperback series that reprints Mark Schultz's award-winning ***Xenozoic Tales*** comic. Each trade paperback volume contains four issues of the comic; ***Cadillacs & Dinosaurs: Time In Overdrive,*** the third volume, reprints ***Xenozoic Tales #s 9-12***. The timing on this trade paperback is fortuitous: the book should hit the comic shop racks shortly before the animated ***Cadillacs & Dinosaurs*** series debuts this fall. Once that series debuts, there should be many more readers looking for the Mark Schultz source material.

Kitchen Sink is releasing ***Cadillacs & Dinosaurs: Time In Overdrive*** as a $14.95 trade paperback and a $29.95 deluxe signed-and-numbered hardcover, allowing fans to choose the version that appeals to them. For readers who haven't previously discovered Mark Schultz's world of the Xenozoic, there's a real bargain available: Kitchen Sink has created a special slipcased edition of all three trade paperbacks (a $50 value) that is priced at only $39.95.

The trade paperback of ***Cadillacs & Dinosaurs: Time In Overdrive*** is slated for early August release, the hardcover should follow at the end of the month, and the slipcased set will follow in early September.

by WAYNE LEE

Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here!...

Has it really been thirty years since Marvel brightened comics fans' summer by unveiling two new superteam books, ***The Avengers*** and ***The X-Men***? If you're at all surprised that three decades have passed, then you're revealing your age—but you're also in a rather elite comics-reading group that should have a special appreciation for the upcoming "Bloodties" storyline that reunites the two superteams for an almost-inevitable confrontation before the sides join forces.

"Bloodties" begins in ***Avengers #368***, a September 23rd release. From there, it continues into ***X-Men #36, Avengers West Coast #101,*** and ***Uncanny X-Men #307***, and concludes in ***Avengers #369.***

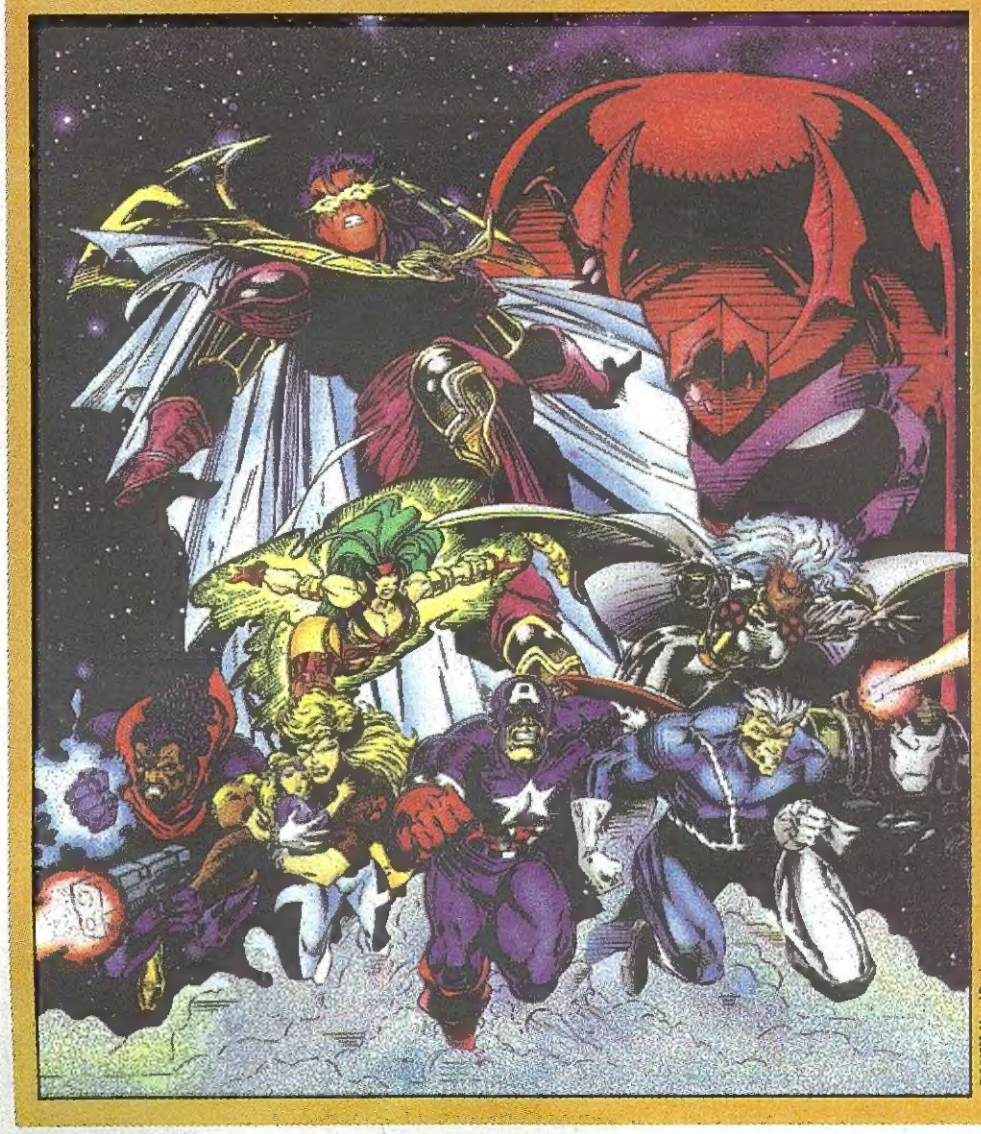
The kidnapping of Magneto's granddaughter Luna sets the chain of events into motion; soon Fabian Cortez, who is involved in the kidnapping, is the target of Exodus, Magneto's heir. Exodus has another assignment from Magneto, though: the master of magnetism wants his children, the Scarlet Witch and Quicksilver, brought to him in his homeland of Avalon—and where the Scarlet Witch and Quicksilver go, the Avengers aren't too far behind. Trying to find out what's behind Exodus' scheme, the X-Men come to Genosha, where a civil war is brewing; before too long, they're involved on one side of the war... and the Avengers are involved on the other.

The regular creative teams of both ***Avengers*** and both ***X-Men*** titles have planned out the five-part storyline together, but each team is responsible for its own chapter. Bob Harras, Steve Epting, and Tom Palmer handle the creative honors for the beginning and ending installments of "Bloodties." The second part is written by Fabian Nicieza and illustrated by Andy Kubert and Matt Ryan; ***Avengers West Coast #101*** is written by Roy Thomas and illustrated by Dave Ross and Tim Dzon; and ***Uncanny X-Men #307*** is written by Scott Lobdell and illustrated by John Romita Jr.

While fans will want to keep up with each installment of the "Bloodties" storyline, the final chapter will be a true must-have: not only will it wrap up the storyline, but it will also feature an all-platinum-foil cover similar to the covers on ***Avengers #s 360, 363,*** and ***366***.

"Bloodties" is the culmination of the year's thirtieth-anniversary celebration for both ***The Avengers*** and ***The X-Men***; as such, this is one party no one's going to want to miss.

by KIM B. PEARSON



A Stranger Walks Among Us

For over forty years now, the Phantom Stranger has wandered mysteriously through the DC Universe, dropping in when he's most needed... and disappearing once again when he's no longer needed. Surprisingly enough, though, the secrets of the Phantom Stranger's past have remained secrets for all of that time; we know little more about his origins now than we knew when he first appeared.

After four decades of secrecy, the Phantom Stranger's past will become a little bit clearer when ***Vertigo Visions—The Phantom Stranger*** debuts in early September. In its pages, readers will meet a withered old man who claims to be the human half of the Phantom Stranger... and they will learn the secrets of the nursing home that now houses his decrepit human shell.

Vertigo Visions—The Phantom Stranger is written by novelist Alisa Kwitney and illustrated by Guy Davis, artist of ***Baker Street*** and ***Sandman Mystery Theatre.*** The sixty-four page oneshot is set in a disquieting nursing home where all the residents desperately want to leave. A new employee, Naomi, begins investigating the home to find out why its inhabitants are so frightened—and what she learns horrifies even her. But will the Phantom Stranger be there to help her when she needs his assistance... or is a victim of this disturbing place, too?

Vertigo Visions—The Phantom Stranger, a $3.50 Vertigo title, is scheduled for September 2nd release.

by CLIFF BIGGERS

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COMIC SHOP NEWS™
8 • 4 • 93
From Your Friendly Neighborhood Comics Outlet
Printed on 100% Recycled Newsprint

Now Here's a Rare Dragon

If you want a *really* rare edition of *Erik Larsen*'s ***Savage Dragon***, then here's the deal for you: Graphitti Designs is producing a 5000-copy limited edition signed hardcover of ***The Savage Dragon,*** featuring the same contents as the recently-released trade paperback. This is more than just a reprint of the first ***Dragon*** miniseries; the 144-page book also features stories from ***Image Comics #0*** and ***Operation: Urban Storm***, as well as new material unavailable anywhere else. Erik Larsen has also created a new illustrated signature page for this book. Now, 2500 of these gems are going to one of those teevee shopping channels that's been touting comics like they created the medium—but the other 2500 are available only through comic shops. Forget gold or platinum or glow-in-the-dark—these are going to be the collectibles to have! If you're interested in this limited edition late-August-release hardcover, talk with the friendly folks at your local comic shop; they can tell you more about price and availability. Oh, while you're at it, tell 'em that ***CSN*** sent you, okay?...

I've Got You Under My Skin...

Boy, comics aren't doing much to promote good human-alien relations, are they? Over at DC, ***Bloodlines*** features some alien parasites who like to gnaw big holes into the spines of their victims and drain off their vital fluids. At Dark Horse, we have Predators who like to collect skulls and spines and Aliens who like to build nests in the humans that they don't eat. And now, at formerly alien-friendly Kitchen Sink, we have ***Flesh Crawlers***...

Flesh Crawlers, a new three-issue bi-monthly limited series by *Richard Rainey* and *Michael Dubisch*, is about as alien-friendly as ***Invasion of the Body Snatchers*** or ***The Puppet Masters.*** In this series, the aliens have been on Earth for twenty years—but they're not content to silently observe our race in action. Instead, they merge with human victims, absorbing their flesh, blood, and DNA. Their enemies are a group of Vietnam vets known as the Force Majure—and their supporters are a group of religious campers who mistake the now-human-looking aliens for resurrected members of their own group. ***Flesh Crawlers #1,*** a $2.50 all-ages book, is scheduled for August release.

Time To Pick Blueberries

It you thought that Graphitti Designs had forgotten about its ongoing Moebius hardcover series, think again: ***Moebius Volume Nine: Blueberry,*** is scheduled for early September release. This $49.95 volume collects ***The Lost Dutchman's Mine, The Ghost With the Golden Bullets,*** and ***Mississippi River*** (each of which was originally published in paperback by Epic) in a single volume. ***Moebius Volume Nine*** will be limited to 1500 signed and numbered copies and will include a full-color dustjacket, illustrated endpapers, embossed hardcovers, and Smyth-sewn binding for durability. Many of the early ***Moebius*** volumes have sold out now, but ***Moebius Volumes 4, 5, 6,*** and ***8*** are still available for the same price. As with all specialty items of this sort, we recommend that, if you're interested, you reserve a copy of this book with your local comic shop—and tell 'em that you heard about it in ***CSN***!

No One Wins at Khe Sanh

Now that Marvel has concluded its series The Nam, the only high-quality, realistic look at the Vietnam War is found in the pages of *Don Lomax*'s ***Vietnam Journal.*** Through the eyes of Scott "Journal" Neithammer, Lomax gives us an up-front look at the war. If you're going through 'Nam withdrawal, then this is the series to help fill the gap. ***Vietnam Journal: Bloodbath at Khe Sanh #4***, the final issue of the latest ***Vietnam Journal*** miniseries, focuses on the final days of one of the most controversial battles of the Vietnam War, revealing the incredible intensity with which the American government pursued victory at Khe Sanh... and the paradoxical way they totally abandoned the base once victory was theirs. Few creators have ever offered a more realistic soldier's-eye view of war than you'll find in this series. ***Vietnam Journal: Bloodbath at Khe Sanh #4***, a $2.75 comic, is scheduled for late August release.

Liefeld Announces Extreme Action

This isn't the sort of news that *Rob Liefeld* fans are going to enjoy hearing: "Rob's gone," editor Eric Stephenson said. "Following the release of his work on Youngblood: Strikefile #3 and his contribution to Deathmate Red, Rob Liefeld will be leaving his Extreme Studios for the unforeseeable future."

Rob Liefeld's departure from the studio doesn't mean that the books produced by Extreme are coming to an end. Extreme Studios, under the direction of *Cheri Liefeld* and *Eric Stephenson*, will continue to produce ***Youngblood, Brigade, Bloodstrike,*** and ***Supreme.*** "We're committed to the new talents we've discovered in the last year. We know we've found the next wave of superstars [*Marat Mychaels, Brian Murray, Dan Fraga, Chuck Jones, Chap Yaep, Danny Miki, Jeff Matsuda,* and *Norm Rapmund*]," Stephenson said. "We feel it is crucial to continue to launch new talent in the marketplace."

So what is Liefeld doing during his absence from comics? Rumors that he's involved with one or more film projects abound, but Liefeld merely says enigmatically, "I need to take my work to the next level and that's what I'm doing." Eric Stephenson feels confident that Rob will be returning to comics again in the future, adding, "He wants to get ***Youngblood*** up and running again. We are very excited to see what he'll come up with."

Heartbreaker Enhances Image

Heartbreaker Hobbies, a leading manufacturer of high-quality miniatures for the gaming industry, has a product that should appeal to comics fans, whether you're a game player or not. Heartbreaker has signed an agreement to produce a series of pewter miniatures based on Image characters, beginning with *Dale Keown*'s ***Pitt*** and continuing with *Marc Silvestri*'s ***Cyberforce***, *Whilce Portacio*'s ***Wetworks,*** *Larry Sroman* and *Todd Johnson*'s ***Tribe,*** *Al Gordon* and *Jerry Ordway*'s ***Wildstar,*** and *Sam Kieth*'s ***The Maxx***. Additional negotiations are underway to produce sculptures of most of the remaining Image heroes. Each pewter sculpture will be hand-poured and hand-finished to achieve the highest quality possible, and no more than 9,999 of each piece will be manufactured, then the molds will be destroyed and the issue retired.

"Image Comics, like Heartbreaker, is only in their second year of business, " Heartbreaker Hobbies president *Bob Watts* said, "yet they've experienced unprecedented meteoric success from their inception. By assembling the best talent in the comic industry, they've created the comic industry's version of the U.S. Olympic Basketball Dream Team."

Fans who are interested in compiling a set of these attractive high-quality collectibles should check with the friendly folks at their local comic shop about price and availability—and be sure to tell them that you heard about it in ***CSN,*** okay?...

Caliber Opens Fire

In the world of comics, the word *espionage* usually invokes images of Nick Fury or James Bond—but in ***Fire,*** a two-issue limited series by *Brian Michael Bendis*, readers are introduced to a much more realistic vision of contemporary international intelligence. Fire is the story of a young man's "rite of passage" in the world of espionage, as he learns that no one can be trusted and nothing is what it seems.

"Based loosely on events in the American covert community during the Reagan era, we are taken from the streets of Cleveland to all four corners of the globe," *Gary Reed* of Caliber Press said. "This intense thriller is told with a unique film-noir style, printed on beautiful white bond paper... The cover is an impressive full-color photo illustration in the tradition of the old pulp novel and movies of the same genre." Each $2.95 issue of ***Fire*** features 48 pages of story and art (with no ads); the second half of the two-issue miniseries will follow just two weeks after ***Fire #1***. Look for them both in September.

COMIC SHOP NEWS
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Publisher
Comic Shop News, Inc.
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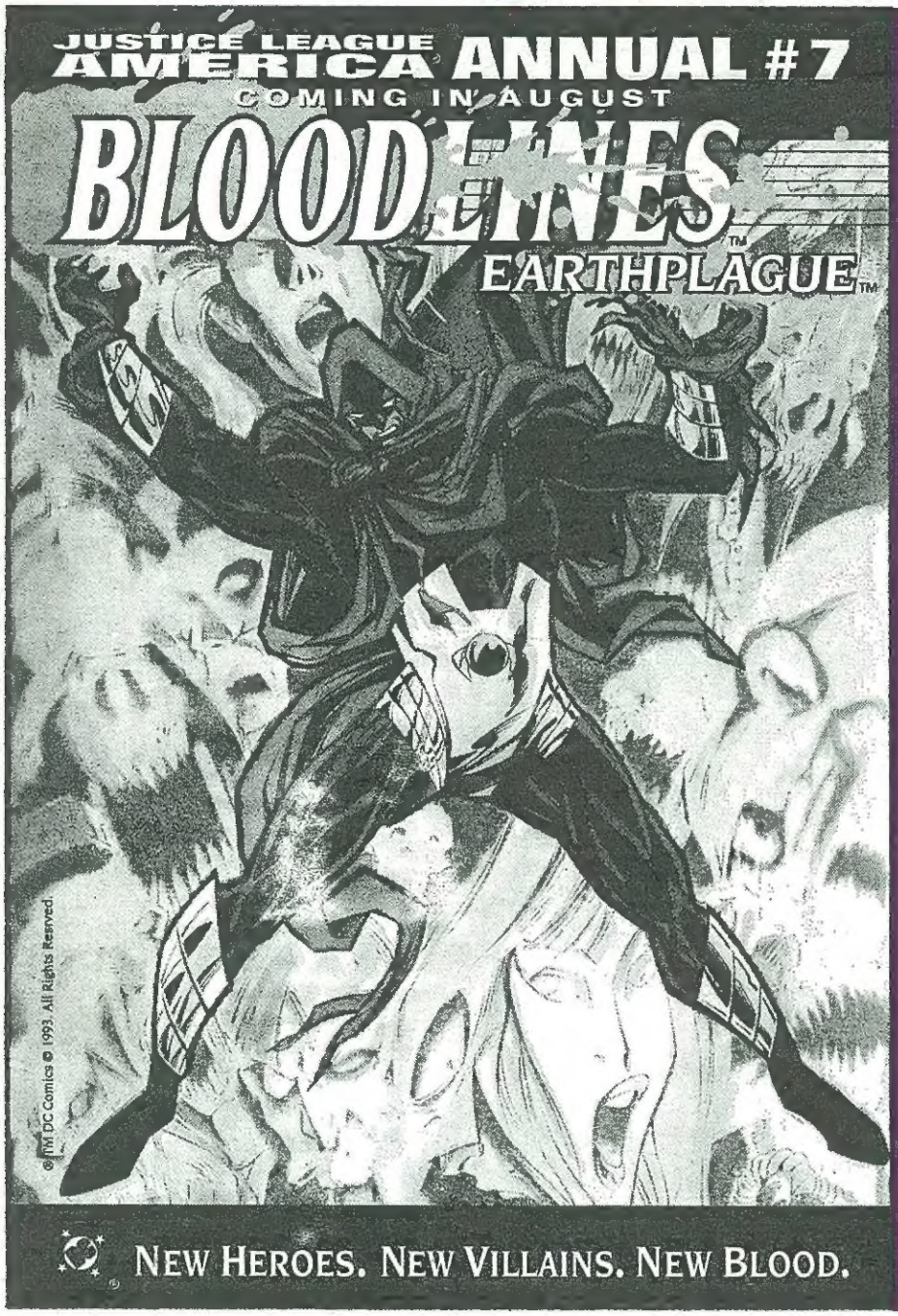
Take Five... For a Bargain Price

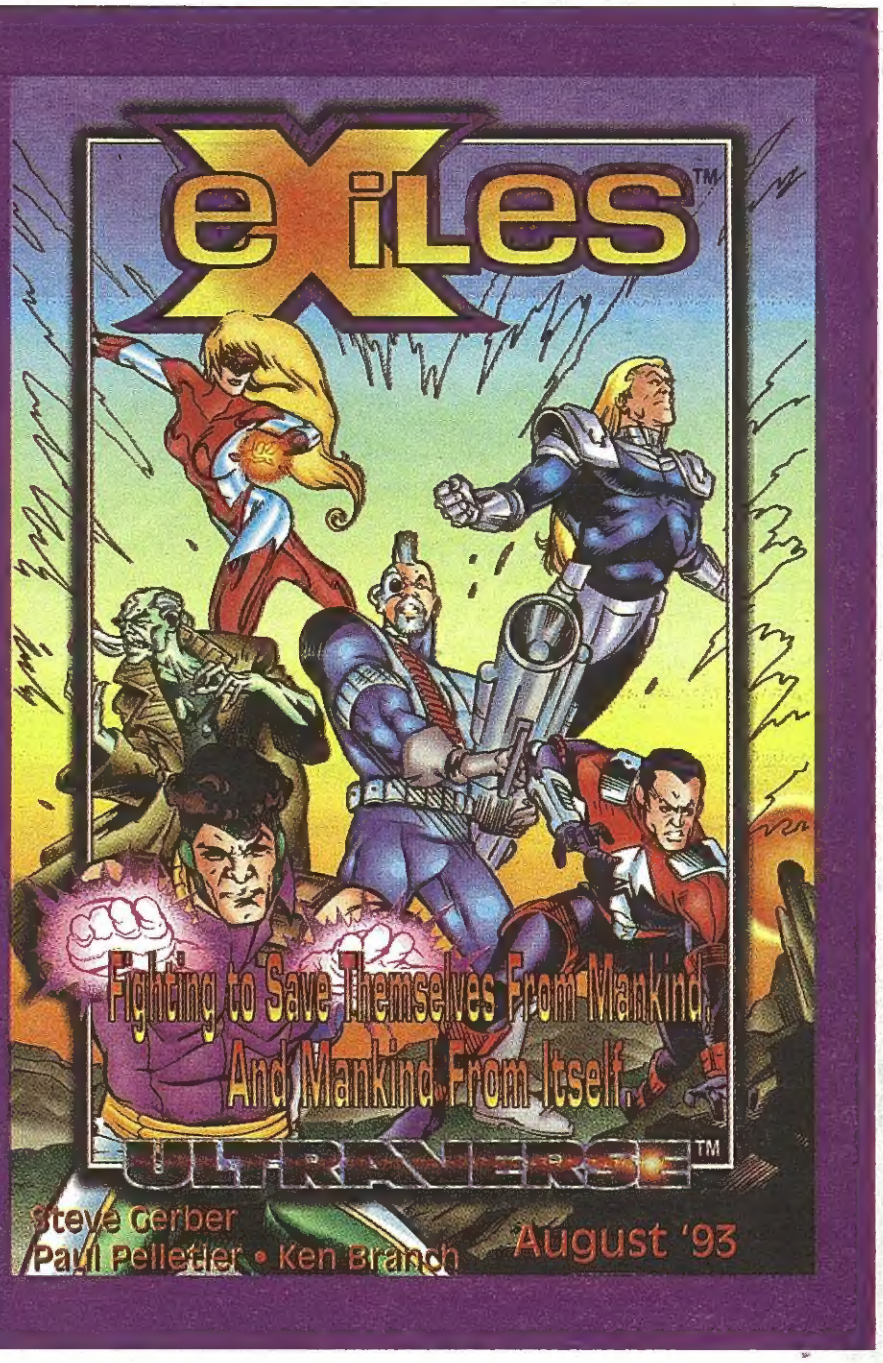
The success of the ***X-Men Animated Series*** is attracting more and more fans to the X-Men comics—but a lot of them are discovering that it's not always easy to drop in on the middle of a long-running storyline and understand just what's happening. Of course, Marvel has tried to make the mutant books a little more accessible by introducing new storylines (like the current return of Magneto saga) that'll intrigue new readers—but they've also come up with a way to introduce fans to a mutant history in an inexpensive and entertaining way. ***The All-New, All-Different X-Men Masterworks Volume One*** reprints the first five adventures of the new X-Men as they originally appeared in ***Giant-Sized X-Men #1*** and ***X-Men #s 94-97***, courtesy of *Len Wein, Chris Claremont,* and *Dave Cockrum.* This $12.95 trade paperback is slated for August 26th release; for less than three bucks a story, fans can find out how it all began and add an attractive volume to their bookshelf at the same time.

They Could Make Beautiful Music Together

art and photo ™ &© 1993 Voyager Communications

If Kiss could appear in a couple of comics, and if the Beatles could guest star in a book or two, then why not Aerosmith? ***Shadowman #19***, an August release, features a special guest appearance by *Steven Tyler* and Aerosmith; of course, it's only logical that they should show up in Shadowman, since he's also a musician, right? Prior to finalizing the arrangement, Tyler paid a visit to the Valiant offices, where Shadowman wasn't available, so he hung out with Valiant publisher/CEO Steve Massarsky instead. If you'd prefer to see some comics action instead of this photo... well, you know what book to keep an eye out for!...

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And Mankind From Itself...
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August '93
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Pictured art by David Williams.

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Just a Test To See If You Were Paying Attention...

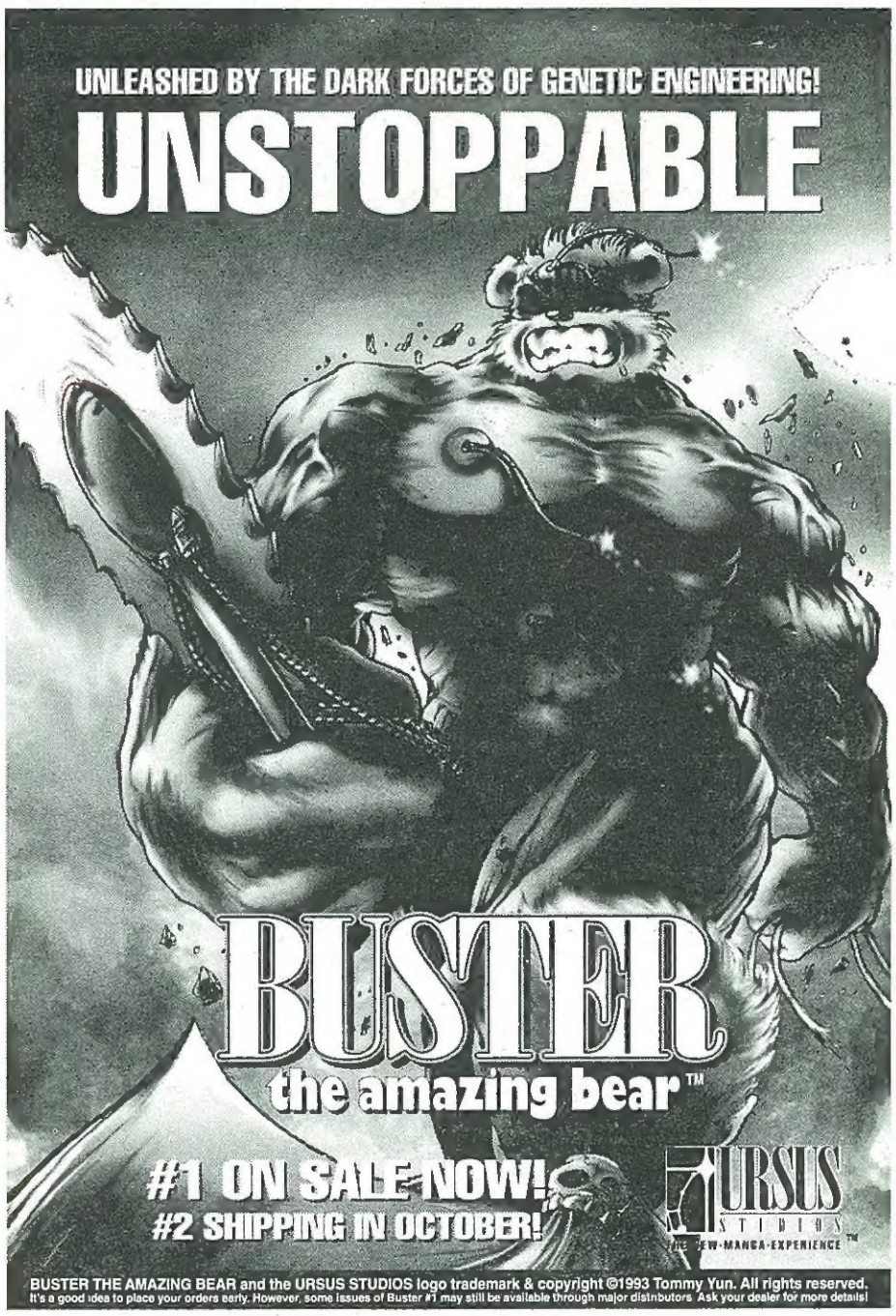
Last week, we told you about four new Marvel posters coming up in September—but the art that we ran wasn't for those four posters at all, but for four already-released posters. This wasn't a mistake, of course—we just wanted to remind you that there were several really nice posters out there that you could use to decorate your walls until these four new posters reach comic shops! In case you've forgotten, the four new posters are: ***Wolverine,*** illustrated by *Mark Beachum; Marc Silvestri & Greg Wright*'s ***Storm Swimsuit Poster; New Warriors*** by *Darick Robertson, Larry Mahlstedt,* and *Bill Bauman,* and the ***Avengers 30th Anniversary Poster*** illustrated by *George Perez & Tom Smith.* Each poster is priced at $4.95; look for 'em on September 16th.

Si! Si! Beck and Caul!

If you have need of a routine private investigator, there are plenty to choose from; if, however, your problem is a bit more paranormal, the choices dwindle quite rapidly. There'll soon be one more agency to choose from, though: Beck & Caul Investigations. Your first chance to meet this team of psychic investigators is coming up in ***U.N. Force #8***; they'll also appeal in a special prelude story in ***U.N. Force #0***. Beck & Caul aren't stuck in supporting roles forever, though; this August, they'll earn their own full color ongoing series, courtesy of *Chaney, Kowalski,* and *Round.* Beck & Caul's adventures often take them into the Underside, the realm of myth and nightmare; this is the world in which all supernatural creatures reside and where anything is possible. The first four issues will include a special coupon that can be redeemed for a special ***Beck & Caul: The Origin*** trade paperback, compiling the story from the first two issues and supplementing it with a new tale available nowhere else. ***Beck & Caul #1,*** a $2.95 book, is scheduled for August release; a $5.95 limited edition is also available, featuring a metallic cover and signatures by at least two of the book's creators.

Read About a Kidnapping Without Paying a Ransom

Viz has published a number of series that have become hits with American audiences, but few of their series have proven as popular as ***Crying Freeman.*** Now on its fifth miniseries run, this saga of a sympathetic assassin continues to attract new readers; some of Viz's trade paperback compilations of early adventures have gone into fourth printings to satisfy the continual demand. If you'd prefer first printings, here's a word to the wise: ***Abduction In Chinatown: Crying Freeman Part Four*** is about to be collected in a 276-page trade paperback (and yes, we're talking first edition here). This volume by *Kazuo Koike* and *Ryoichi Ikegami* takes Freeman into Los Angeles' Chinatown, where he must help a local boss whose daughter and her family have been kidnapped. As it turns out, the kidnapping is part of an elaborate plot to capture Freeman— because the leader of the kidnappers is sexually obsessed with the assassin. So does her survive? Well, since there's a ***Crying Freeman Part Five***, we'd guess he does—but the fun of the series is seeing just how he gets in and out of trouble. ***Abduction In Chinatown***, a $16.95 trade paperback, is scheduled for August 26th release.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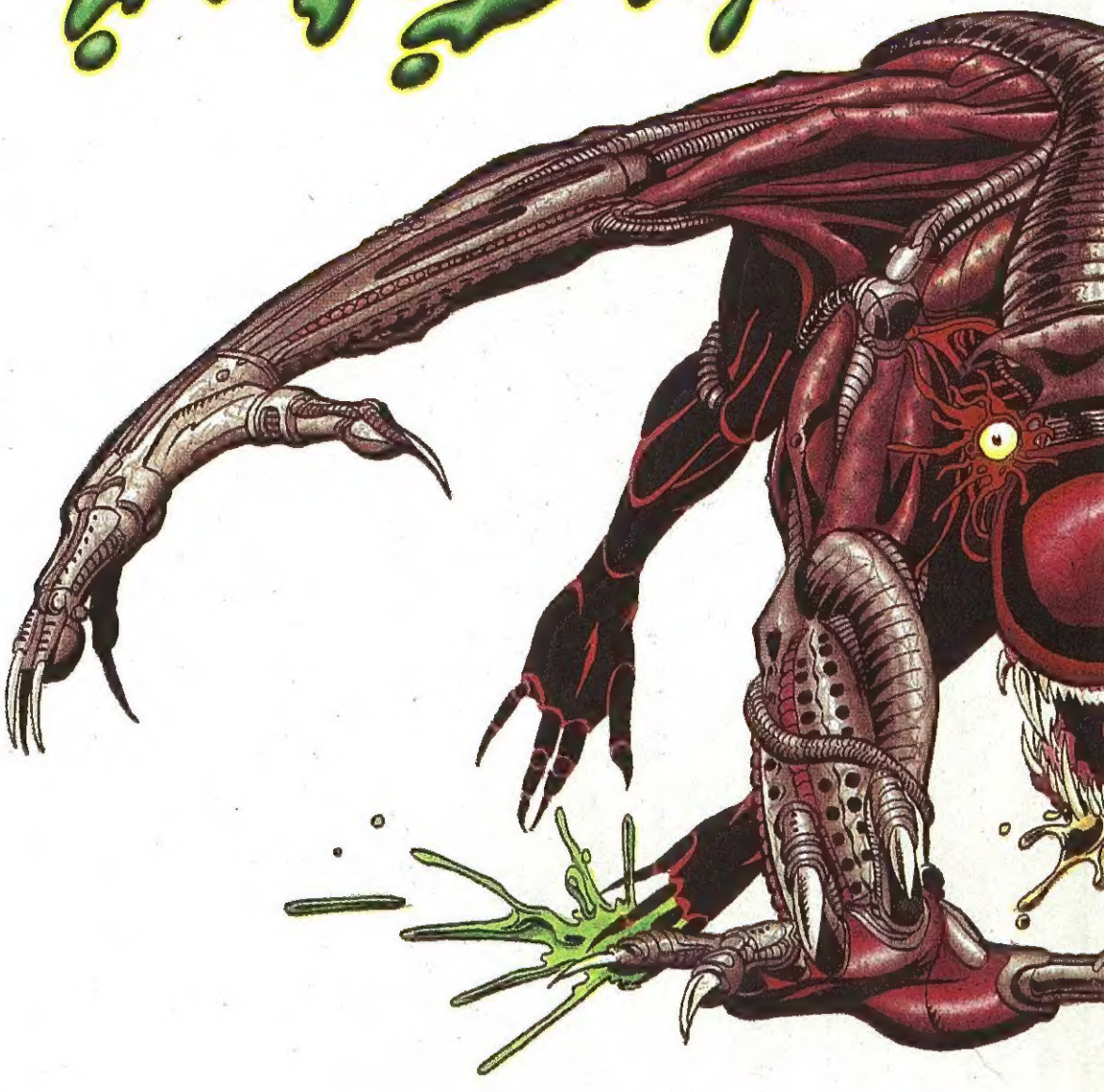
It's a good idea to place your orders early. However, some issues of Buster #1 may still be available through major distributors. Ask your dealer for more details!

WARRIORS OF PLASM™



COMIN' ATCHA!

There's no escaping it!
The adventure begins in August.

BEYOND THE IMAGINARY LIMITS!

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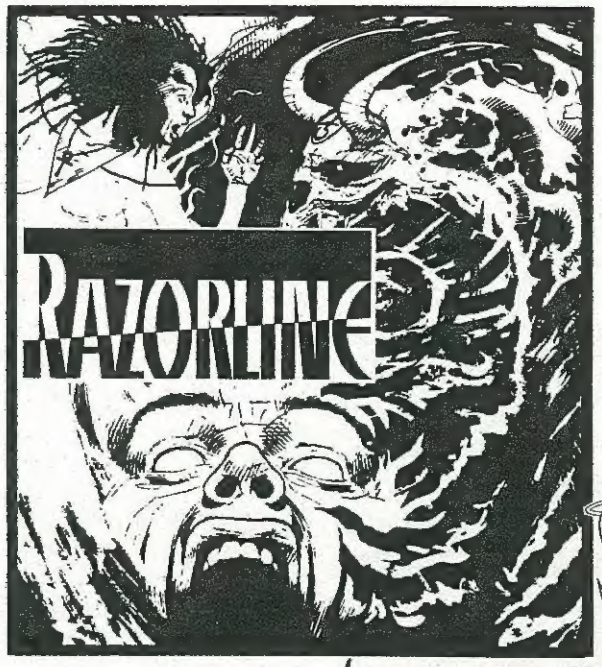


SAINT SINNER #1

TO GET TO HEAVEN, HE'S GOT TO GO THROUGH HELL.

With both a demon and an angel living inside him, Phillip Fetter begins a journey of adventure and discovery into the brightest and darkest regions of the imagination. By Elaine Lee and Max Douglas, this comic is sure to be one of your prize possessions.

SAINT SINNER

MARVEL COMICS

THUNDERSTRIKE #1

HE'S TRADED IN THE RAINBOW BRIDGE FOR THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE.

Lightning does strike twice as Eric Masterson becomes New York's very own Thunder God, Thunderstrike! You still can't pick up his new hammer, but you can pick up Thunderstrike's premiere issue. Written and drawn by Thor veterans Tom DeFalco and Ron Frenz, this 48-page comic with a lightning design foil-stamped cover is gonna go fast. It's Hammer Time!

GREATEST BATTLES OF THE AVENGERS TRADE PAPERBACK

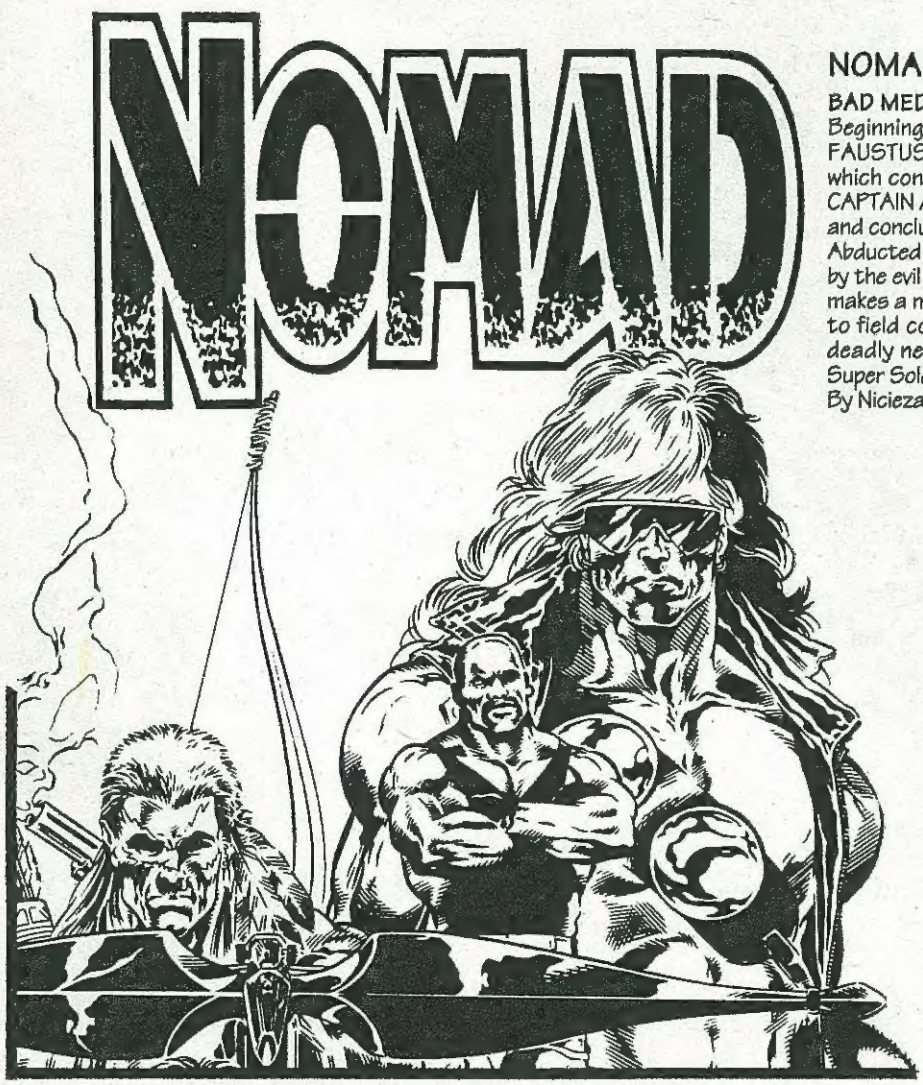
BATTLES ROYALE!!!

In celebration of their 30th Anniversary, this 160 page collection reprints the most riveting Avengers tales of all time (including the first appearance of Rogue!). The X-Men, Warlock, Thanos and an armada of other guest stars all add to the mayhem in these Earth-shattering issues! From Claremont, Starlin, Golden, and many, many more!!!

THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS TRADE PAPERBACK

THE INSIDE STORY ON ETERNAL DAMNATION!!!

Adapted from the C.S. Lewis masterpiece, this 96-page tongue-in-cheek trade paperback allows us to spy on Arch-demon Screwtape as he explains to his nephew and demon-in-training, Wormwood, how to capture human souls. With a special intro by Neil (Sandman) Gaiman! By Hall and Redding.



NOMAD #18

BAD MEDICINE!!!

Beginning the 3-part FAUSTUS AFFAIR, which continues in CAPTAIN AMERICA #420 and concludes in NOMAD #19. Abducted and brainwashed by the evil Dr. Faustus, Nomad makes a minor career change... to field commander of a deadly new army of Super Soldier assassins!!! By Nicieza, Mays, and Adams.

DAREDEVIL #321

BATTLE FATIGUES

Presenting the first appearance of DD's new costume, #321 features Daredevil and Hellspawn, the Daredevil doppelganger, locking horns over the dread "About Face" virus that threatens Manhattan. It's a free-for-all that may spell the end for the sightless swashbuckler. Amidst all the chaos, dark forces seek the resurrection of DD's most lethal foe!! Nick Fury, Siege, and Venom guest-star. Glow-in-the-dark cover. By Chichester, McDaniel, Colazzo.

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #105

CRUSADE CROSSOVERS

The never-ending battle continues in this week's Infinity Crusade crossover titles

WARLOCK CHRONICLES #4

SILVER SURFER ANNUAL #6

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON!

Enter Legacy! If the Surfer can't help this son of a legendary Marvel hero learn his father's trade quickly enough, Ronan the Accuser's gonna make Legacy wish his dad was a baker! Also, back-up stories of Terrax, Jack of Hearts, and Ganymede, plus a Surfer pinup gallery! Comes polybagged with a rookie trading card. By Marz, Philips, and Christopher.

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IT'S THE COST OF A REGULAR CALL FROM ANYWHERE IN THE UNITED STATES AND WON'T EXCEED 35 CENTS.

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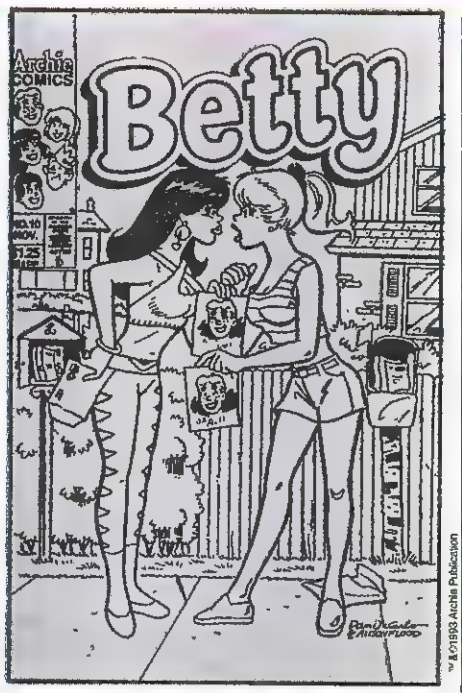
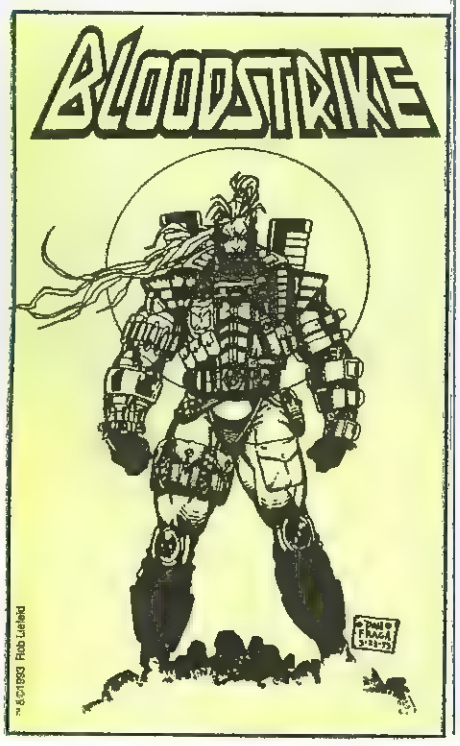
AUGUST CHECKLIST

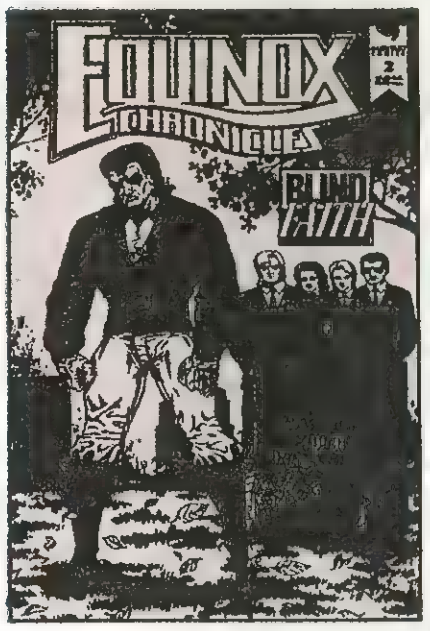
❒ ***1963 5: Horus, Lord of Light*** Image $1.95
Alan Moore's homage to ealry Silver Age Marvel continues
❒ ***2099 Unlimited 2*** 8/5 Marvel $3.95
❒ ***666: Mark of the Beast 18*** Fleetway-Quality $1.95
❒ ***Action Comics 691*** 8/5 DC $1.50
❒ ***ARBB Hamsters: Lost & Alone in New York 1*** Parody $3.95
❒ ***Advance Comics 58*** CCD $2
Find out what's coming up in October
❒ ***Adventures of Chrissie Claus 3*** Heroic $2.95
❒ ***Adventures of Superman Annual 5*** 8/19 DC $2.50
A Bloodlines installment
❒ ***Airlock 4*** Eclectus $3
❒ ***Airtight Garage 4*** 8/5 Marvel $2.50
❒ ***Akira 37*** 8/26 Marvel $5.95
❒ ***Albedo 9*** antarctic $2.50
❒ ***Aliens UK Vol 2 11*** 8/12 Dark HOrse $2.95
❒ ***Aliens UK Vol 2 12*** 8/26 Dark Horse $2.95
❒ ***Alpha Flight 125*** 8/12 Marvel $1.75
❒ ***Alvin & the Chipmunks 3*** Harvey $1.50
❒ ***Amazing Heroes Interviews 3*** Amazing Heroes $3.95
Featuring an interview with Jim Shooter
❒ ***Amazing Heroes Swimsuit Special 5*** Amazing Heroes $3.95
❒ ***Amazing Spider-Man 382*** 8/12 Marvel $1.25
❒ ***Ania Collector Cards*** CI $1/pack
Featuring the heroes from the Ania Afrocentric comics line
❒ ***Animato 26*** animato $4
❒ ***Animerica 6*** Viz $4.95
❒ ***Apocalypse: The Eyes of Doom*** Kitchen Sink $14.95
❒ ***Archer & Armstrong 16*** Valiant $2.50
❒ ***Archie 417*** Archie $1.25
❒ ***Archie Digest 124*** Archie $1.50
❒ ***Arena 13*** Sky $3.50
❒ ***Armor 5*** Continuity $2.50
❒ ***Arthur Jermyn*** Caliber $2.95
❒ ***Avengers 367*** 8/19 Marvel $1.25
❒ ***Avengers 16 Milestone*** 8/12 Marvel $2.95
❒ ***Avengers West Coast 99*** 8/5 Marvel $1.25
❒ ***Avengers: Terminatrix Objective 2*** 8/26 Marvel $1.25
❒ ***Barbie 23*** 8/12 Marvel $1.25
❒ ***Batman 500*** 8/19 DC $3.95/$2.50
Azrael brings some serious changes to the Batman mythos: a new costume, a new attitude, and a new modus operandi... without Robin—A CSN Hot Pick
❒ ***Batman 500 T-Shirt*** 8/12 DC $15.95
❒ ***Batman ADventures 12*** 8/5 DC $1.25
❒ ***Batman Temporary Tattoos*** 8/26 DC $3.95
❒ ***Batman: Birth of the Demon GN*** 8/5 DC $12.95
❒ ***Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight 52*** 8/19 DC $1.75
❒ ***Batman: Shadow of the Bat 17*** 8/12 DC $1.75
❒ ***Batman: Shadow of the Bat 18*** 8/26 DC $1.75
A tie-n with the Batman: Knightfall storyline
❒ ***Batman: Venom TPB*** 8/19 DC $9.95
Reprinting the story that introduced Venom, the drug responsible for Bane
❒ ***Batlle Angel Alita Part Two 5*** Viz $2.75
❒ ***Battron 3*** NEC $2.75
❒ ***Beauty & the Beast 7*** Innovation $2.50
❒ ***Beck & Caul 1*** Caliber $2.95
A spinoff from UN Force featuring mystical detectives
❒ ***Betty 10*** Archie $1.25
❒ ***Betty & Veronica Double Digest 41*** Archie $2.50
❒ ***Bill the Clown: Death & Clown White*** Slaver Labor $2.95
❒ ***Bioneers 1*** Mirage/Next $2.75
A.C. Farley introduces a group of genetically engineered superheroes in this miniseries
❒ ***Black Axe 7*** 8/26 Marvel $1.75
❒ ***Black Canary 10*** 8/26 DC $1.75
❒ ***Black Orchid 2*** 8/19 DC $1.95



❒ ***Blazing Combat: WWI & II 1*** Apple $3.75
Reprinting war stories from the Warren Blazing Combat magazine
❒ ***Bleeding Heart 5*** Fantagraphics $2.50
❒ ***Bloodfire 3*** Lightning $2.95
❒ ***Bloodseed 2*** 8/19 Marvel $1.95
❒ ***Bloodshot 10*** Valiant $2.25
❒ ***Bloodstrike 5*** Image $1.95
❒ ***Bog the Frog 1*** Bugged-Out Comics $1.95
❒ ***Bogie Man: Chinatoon GN*** Atomeka $8.95
❒ ***Bombshell*** SQP $12
❒ ***Boomerabilia Magazine 1*** Boomerabilia $3.95
New magazine designe dto appeal to baby boomers with articles about television, comics, toys, and more
❒ ***Brain Capers 1*** Fantagraphics $3.95
❒ ***Brigade 4*** Image $1.95
❒ ***Broken Mirrors, Broken Minds TPB*** Fantaco $24.95
❒ ***Brother Mecvh 1*** Mantis $1.95
❒ ***Bucky O'Hare Volume 2 2*** Continuity $3.25
❒ ***Buster the Amazing Bear 1*** Ursus $2.50
❒ ***Cable 6*** 8/5 Marvel $2
❒ ***Cadillacs & Dinosaurs: Time In Overdrive HC*** Kitchen Sink $29.95
Reprinting Xenozoic Tales #s9-12 in a deluxe signed hardcover
❒ ***Cage 19*** 8/5 Marvel $1.25
❒ ***Cain 4*** Harris $2.95
❒ ***Cannibals 1*** Raging Rhino $2.95
❒ ***Cape City 3*** Dimension X $2.75
❒ ***Captain America 420*** 8/5 Marvel $1.25
❒ ***Captain Canuck Reborn 1*** Semple $2.95
Richard Comely's Canadian hero is back in his own ongoing series
❒ ***Captain Harlock: Machine People 4*** Eternity $2.50
❒ ***Caravan Kidd Part 2 4*** 8/19 Dark Horse $2.50
❒ ***Carl Barks Library Album 20*** Gladstone $8.95
❒ ***Casper 17*** Harvey $1.50
❒ ***Casper Enchanted Tales Digest 6*** Harvey $1.75
❒ ***Catwoman 2*** 8/5 DC $1.50
❒ ***Cerebus 173*** Aardvark-Vanaheim $2.25
❒ ***Chain Gang War 4*** 8/19 DC $1.75
❒ ***Champions 13*** Heroic $3.95
❒ ***Cheval Noir 45*** 8/12 Dark Horse $2.95
❒ ***Children of the Voyager 2*** 8/5 Marvel $2.95
❒ ***Chroma-Tick 8*** NEC $3.50
❒ ***Chromium Man 1*** Triumphant $2.50
❒ ***Classic Star Wars 11*** 8/5 Dark Horse $2.50
❒ ***Cold Blooded 4*** Northstar $4.95
❒ ***Comic Relief 56*** Page One, Inc. $3.95
❒ ***Comics Debut 3*** CSN 98¢
Featuring previews of Captain Sternn #1, Vortex "Division 13" #1, Ex-Mutants #11, Images of Shadowhawk #1, Q-Unit #1 and two more!
❒ ***Comics Interview 125*** CI $3.95
Spotlighting the changes in Batman
❒ ***Comics Interview 126*** CI $3.95
Focus on Star Trek
❒ ***Comics Journal 162*** Fantagraphics $3.95
A talk With Chester Brown, Joe Matt, and Seth
❒ ***Comics Revue 89*** Manuscript $5.95
❒ ***Comics Scene 28*** Starlog $4.95
❒ ***Comics Values Annual 1993-94*** Attic $15.95
❒ ***Comics Values Monthly 86*** Attic $3.50
❒ ***Commodore Dinosaur 2*** Pocket Change 99¢
❒ ***Conan 276*** 8/19 Marvel $1.25
❒ ***Conan Saga 79*** 8/19 Marvel $2.25
❒ ***Crazyman Vol 2 2*** Continuity $2.50
❒ ***Crow Collected*** Kitchen Sink $15.95
Compilation volume featuring the entire James O'Barr storyline in a single trade paperback
❒ ***Crumb Sketchbook Volume 3*** Fantagraphics $19.95/$39.95/$75
❒ ***Crying Freeman Part Five 10*** Viz $2.75
❒ ***Crying Freeman: Abduction in Chinatown GN*** Viz $16.95
❒ ***Cyberforce Poster 1*** Image $4.95
❒ ***CyberRad Vol 2 3*** Continuity $2.50
❒ ***Cyberspace 3000 4*** 8/19 Marvel $1.75
❒ ***Damien Darke: The Living Dead 1*** Atomeka $3.50
❒ ***Damlog the Assassinator 1*** acid Rain $2.95
❒ ***Dances With Demons 2*** 8/26 Marvel $1.95
❒ ***Daredevil 321*** 8/5 Marvel $2/$1.25
❒ ***Daredevil: Man Without Fear 1*** 8/26 Marvel $2.95
Frank Miller and John Romita Jr. tell the story of Matt Murdock's transition into the superhero known as Daredevil in this five-issue limited series—a CSN Hot Pick
❒ ***Dark Angel 15*** 8/19 Marvel $1.75
❒ ***Dark Dominion Binder*** River Group $15
❒ ***Dark Dominion Zero Trading Cards*** River Group $1.50/pack
Build your own zero issue with this trading card set
❒ ***Dark Guard 1*** Marvel $2.95
❒ ***Dark Volume 2 4*** Continum $1.95
❒ ***Darker Image 4*** Image $2.50
❒ ***Darkhawk 32*** 8/5 Marvel $1.25
❒ ***Darkhold 13*** 8/12 Marvel $1.75
❒ ***Darkstars 12*** 8/5 DC $1.75
❒ ***Days of Wrath 3*** Apple $2.75
❒ ***DC Universe: Trinity 2*** 8/12 DC $2.95
❒ ***Dead 3*** Arrow $2.25
❒ ***Dead Man Walking TPB*** Boneyard $4.95
❒ ***Dead Meat 1*** Fleetway/Quality $2.95
❒ ***Deadbeats 2*** Claypool $2.50
❒ ***Deadpool 3*** 8/19 Marvel $2



❒ ***Death Shrike 2*** brainstrom $2.95
❒ ***Death's Head II 11*** 8/26 Marvel $1.95
❒ ***Death's Head II/Killpower: Battletide II 3*** 8/5 Marvel $1.75
❒ ***Death3 2*** 8/19 Marvel $1.75
❒ ***Deathblow 4*** Image $1.95
❒ ***Deathlok 28*** 8/26 Marvel $1.75
❒ ***Deathlok Annual 2*** 8/26 Marvel $2.95
❒ ***Deathmate Epilogue*** Image $2.95
The finale to the Image-Valiant crossover splits apart the two universes once again—but neither world will be quite the same... —a CSN Hot Pick
❒ ***Deathstroke, the Terminator 29*** 8/19 DC $1.75
❒ ***Demon 40*** 8/26 DC $1.75
❒ ***Detective Comics Annual 6*** 8/5 DC $2.50
Bloodlines installment
❒ ***Dinosaurs For Hire 7*** Malibu $2.50
❒ ***Dirty Pair: Sim Hell 4*** 8/12 Dark Horse $2.50
❒ ***DOA 2*** great white $2.50
❒ ***Doctor Who: Classic Comics 10*** 8/26 Marvel $4.95
❒ ***Dojinshi 7*** Antractic $2.95
❒ ***Donald & Mickey 20*** Gladstone $2.95
❒ ***Donald Duck 281 Gladstone $1.50***
❒ ***Donna Matrix 1*** Reactor, Inc. $2.95
When a pleasuredroid's program is crossed with that of a stealth fighter, the result is a droid with a real attitude problem; this new computer-generated comic is produced by Michael Saenz, the creator responsible for the first computer-generated comic
❒ ***Doom 2099 10*** 8/19 Marvel $1.25
❒ ***Doom Patrol 70*** 8/5 DC $1.95
❒ ***Doom's IV 3*** Image $1.95



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❒ ***Doorman 2*** Cult $2.75
❒ ***Dr. Death: Rx For Suicide*** Comic Zone $2.95
❒ ***Draculina 16*** Draculina $3.75
❒ ***E-Man 1*** Alpha $2.75/$3.25
E-Man is back in action; his first new adventure introduces Eco-Man, who's more than he appears to be
❒ ***Earth 4 Vol 3 #2*** Continuity $2.50
❒ ***Ebony Warrior 3*** Ania $1.95
❒ ***Eclipso 12*** 8/26 DC $1.25
❒ ***Ectokid 2*** 8/19 Marvel $1.75
❒ ***Elementals 31*** Comico $2.50
❒ ***Elementals Sex Special 9*** Comico $2.95
❒ ***Elfquest: New Blood 8*** Warp $2
❒ ***Elvira 4*** Claypool $2.50
❒ ***Enigma 7*** 8/12 DC $2.50
❒ ***Epi-Log 37*** Star Tech $5.95
❒ ***Epi-Log 38*** Star Tech $5.95
❒ ***Epi-Log Journal 11*** Star Tech $5.95
❒ ***Epi-Log Journal 12*** Star Tech $5.95
❒ ***Equinox Chronicles: Blind Faith 2*** Caliber $2.95
❒ ***Eternal Warrior 16*** Valiant $2.25
❒ ***Eternity Triple Action 6*** Eternity $2.50
❒ ***Evil Ernie: The Resurrection 4*** Chaos $2.95

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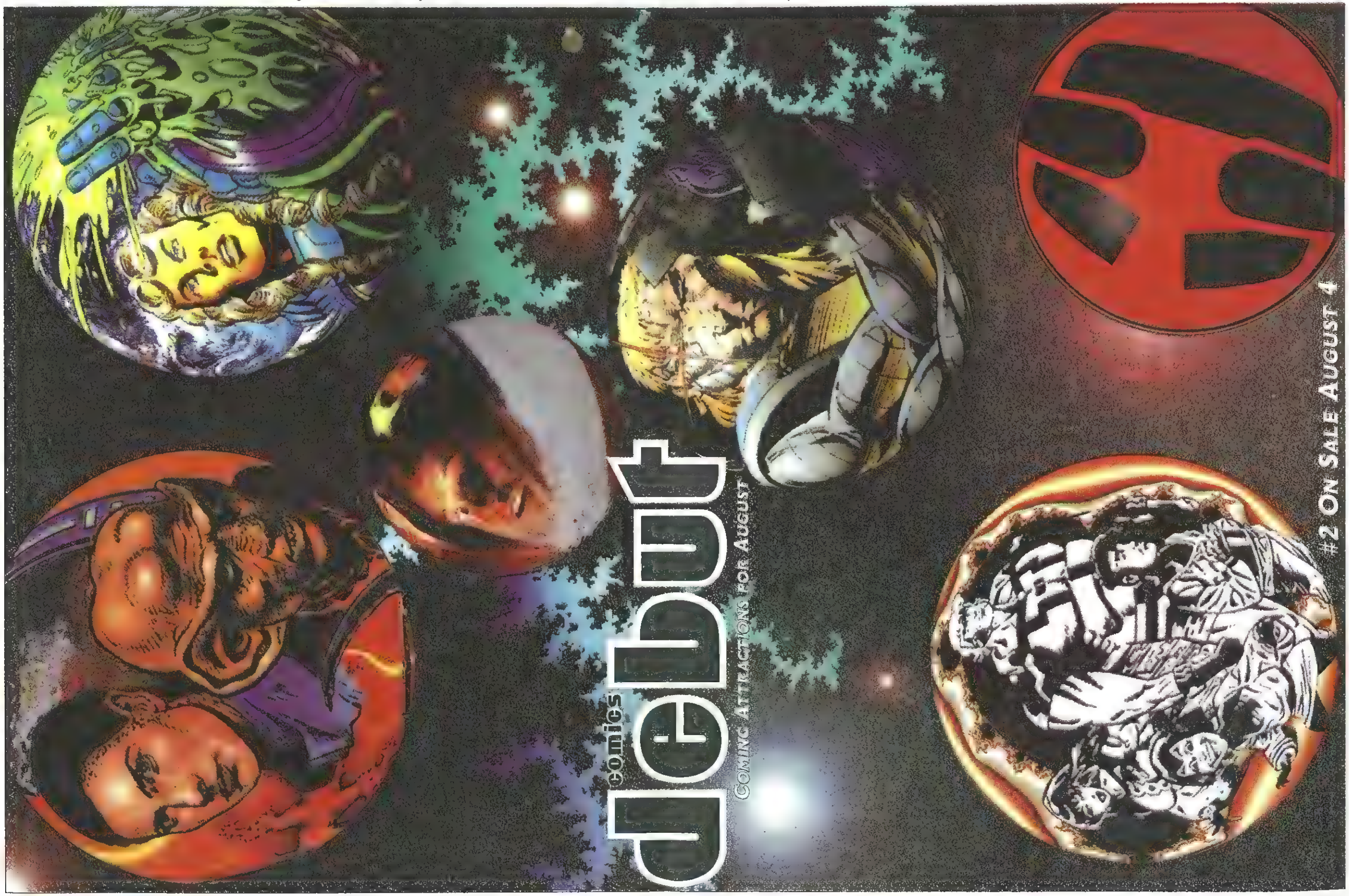

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CODENAME: STRYKE FORCE

Created & Written by Marc Silvestri
Art by Brandon Peterson

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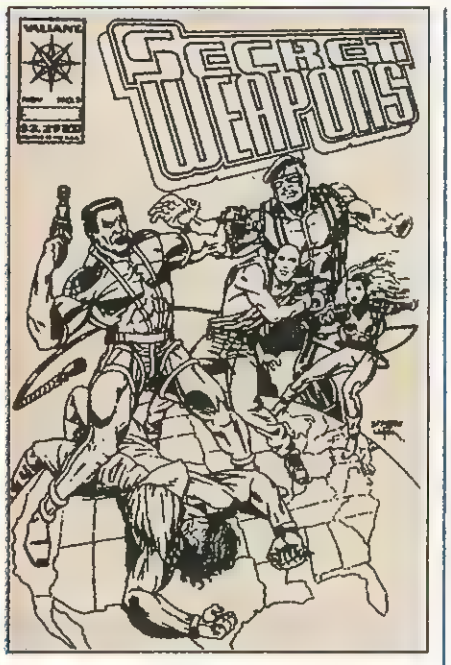
AUGUST CHECKLIST

❒***Ex-Mutants 10*** Malibu $1.95
❒***Excalibur 70*** 8/19 Masrvel $1.75
❒***Exiles 1*** Malibu/Ultraverse $1.95
The Theta Virus has created a new breed of superheroes—but it can also cause its victims to die! Steve Gerber, Paul Pelletier, and Ken Branch present this new Ultraverse series—a CSN Hot Pick
❒***Extreme 1*** Image $2.95
A new anthology series featuring work by the gang at Extreme Studios
❒***Extremist 1*** 8/5 Vertigo/DC $1.95
Peter Milligan and Ted McKeever introduce this dark, sensual series that probes deep in to the sexual underground
❒***Fangoria 127*** Starlog $4.95

❒***Fantastic Panic 1*** Antarctic $2.75
❒***Femforce 64*** AC $2.95
❒***Femforce Up Close 5*** AC $2.95
❒***Ferret 4*** Malibu $2.50
❒***Feud 4*** 8/26 Marvel $1.95
❒***Finn 3*** Fleetway/Quality $2.95
❒***Flare 14*** Heroic $3.95
❒***Flash 82*** 8/19 DC $1.25
❒***Flesh 1*** Fleetway/Quality $2.95
❒***Flesh Crawlers 1*** Kitchen Sink $2.50
❒***Flintstones 7*** Harvey $1.50
❒***Force 1*** LPH $1.50
❒***Freex 2*** Malibu/Ultraverse $1.95
❒***Fright Night 3-D Summer Special*** Now $2.95
❒***Galaxinovels: Agent Three Zero 1*** Galaxinovels $3.95
Illustrated novellas featuring art by some of comics' best-known talents
❒***Game Shop News 20*** CSN
What CSN does for comics, GSN does for gaming; no one tells you more about what's coming up in the gaming field each month
❒***Gareth Blackmore's Unusual Tales 2*** Blackmore $3.50
❒***Gen-X 1*** Image $2.50
Four teenagers' lives are turned upside down when the government decides that they pose a deadly threat and must be stopped at all costs
❒***Gene Dogs 1*** 8/19 Marvel $2.75
❒***Genetix 1*** 8/26 Marvel $2.75
❒***Ghost Rider 42*** 8/12 Marvel $1.75
❒***Ghost Rider Caps*** Marvel $3.99
❒***GI Joe 141*** 8/19 Marvel $1.25
❒***Gold Digger 2*** Antarctic $2.50
❒***Golden Age 1*** 8/5 DC $4.95
James Robinson and Paul Smith present this Elseworlds series that shows what happened to the Golden Age heroes after WWII ended—A CSN Hot Pick
❒***Golden City Week 4: Catalyst*** 8/5 Dark Horse $1
❒***Gravestone 2*** Malibu $2.25
❒***Greatest Battles of the Avengers TPB*** 8/5 Marvel $15.95
❒***Green Arrow 78*** 8/5 DC $1.75
❒***Green Hornet 26*** Now $1.95
❒***Green Lantern 46*** 8/26 DC $1.25
❒***Green Lantern: Mosaic 17*** 8/19 DC $1.25
❒***Grendel Tales 1*** 8/19 Dark Horse $2.95
James Robinson and Teddy Kristiansen present a New Orleans power struggle involving four Grendels—a CSN Hot Pick
❒***Groo the Wanderer 105*** 8/5 Marvel $2.25
❒***Groo: Festival TPB*** 8/12 Marvel $10.95
❒***Guardians of the Galaxy 41*** 8/12 Marvel $1.25
❒***Gun Runner 1*** 8/5 Marvel $2 75
❒***Guy Gardner 12*** 8/5 DC $1.25
❒***H.P. Lovecraft's Cthulhu: Festival of Death 2*** Millennium $2.50
❒***Hall of Heroes 1*** Hall of Heroes $2.50
❒***Hanna and Her Pal*** Kitchen Sink $9.95
❒***Harbinger 23*** Valiant $2.25
❒***HARD Corps 12*** Valiant $2.25
❒***Hard Rock Comics 19*** Revolutionary $2.50
❒***Hardcase 3*** Malibu/Ultraverse $1.95
❒***Hardware 8*** 8/19 Milestone/DC $1.50
❒***Hawkman 2*** 8/26 DC $1.75
❒***Hawkman Annual 1*** 8/26 DC $3.50
❒***Heavy Metal November 1993*** HM $3.95
❒***Hellblazer 70*** 8/26 Vertigo/DC $1.95
❒***Hellstorm 7*** 8/26 Marvel $2
❒***Hero Illustrated 3*** Warrior $3.95
❒***Heroes Incorporated 2*** Brainstorm $2.95
❒***Heru, Son of Ausar 3*** Ania $1.95
❒***Hitomi II 1*** Antarctic $2.50
❒***Hokum & Hex 2*** 8/26 Razorline/Marvel $1.75
❒***Hunted 3*** Mantis $1.95
❒***Hybrids: The Origin! 3*** Continuity $2.50
❒***Hyperkind 2*** 8/12 Razorline/Marvel $1.75
❒***Icon 6*** 8/26 Milestone/DC $1.50
❒***Idiotland 3*** Fantagraphics $2.50
❒***Immortalis 2*** 8/5 Marvel $1.95
❒***Incomplete Deaths' Head 10*** 8/26 Marvel $1.75
❒***Incredible Crash Dummies 2*** Harvey $1.50
❒***Incredible Hulk 410*** 8/19 Marvel $1.25
❒***Infinity Crusade 5*** 8/26 Marvel $2.50
❒***Infinity Charade 1*** Parody $3.95
❒***Ironwood 9*** Eros $2.50
❒***James Bond 007: Silent Armageddon 3*** 8/26 Dark Horse $2.95
❒***James Gang 1*** London Night $2.95
❒***Jason Goes to Hell 2*** Topps $2.95
❒***Jetsons 6*** Harvey $1.50
❒***John Byrne's Next Men 17*** 8/12 Dark Horse $2.50
❒***Jonah Hex: Two Gunh Mojo 3*** 8/19 Vertigo/DC $2.95
Joe R. Lansdale and Tim Truman continue their story of the Old West—an era that just won't stay dead!...
❒***Judgment Day 1*** Lightning $3.50
❒***Jughead 51*** Archie $1.25
❒***Jughead Jones Digest 85*** Archie $1.50
❒***Jughead's Double Digest*** Archie $2.50
❒***Jurassic Park 4*** Topps $2.95
❒***Justice League America 81*** 8/26 DC $1.25
❒***Justice League America Annual 7*** 8/12 DC $2.50
Bloodlines installment
❒***Justice League International 55*** 8/12 DC $1.25
❒***Justice League International 56*** 8/26 DC $1.25
❒***Kamandi: At Earth's End 4*** 8/5 DC $1.75
❒***Kato III 1*** Now $2.50
New Kato limited series by Mike Baron and Bob Bilau
❒***Kid Eternity 6*** 8/26 Vertigo/DC $1.95
❒***Killpower: The Early Years 2*** 8/5 Marvel $1.75
❒***Lady Arcane 6*** Heroic $3.95
❒***Last Action Hero 3*** Topps $2.95
❒***Last One 3*** 8/12 Vertigo/DC $2.50
❒***Laugh Digest 110*** Archie $1.50
❒***Lazarus Churchyard Collection*** Atomeka $9.95
❒***Legends 2*** Black Dragon $2.95
❒***Legion of Super-Heroes 48*** 8/26 DC $1.75
❒***Legionnaires 7*** 8/19 DC $1.25
❒***Legionnaires Logo T-Shirt*** 8/19 Graphitti $16.95
❒***Lethal Foes of Spider-Man 2*** 8/12 Marvel $1.75
❒***Life of Death HC*** Eclipse $32.99
❒***Lobo Convention Special 1*** 8/12 DC $1.75
Lobo wants a replacement copy of Superman #75 after he tore his apart laughing at the story... and he doesn't intend to pay too much for his comic!
❒***Lone Ranger Comics 3*** Pure Imagination $3
❒***Lost In Space: Arrival 3*** Innovation $2.50
❒***Lux & Alby 5*** 8/19 Dark Horse $2.50
❒***Lycra-Woman and Spandex Girl Summer Vacation Special 1*** Comic Zone $2.95
❒***Mack Bolan: The Executioner 2*** Innovation $2.50
❒***Mad Dog 6*** 8/19 Marvel $1.25
❒***Mad Magazine 323*** Mad $1.75
❒***Madman: The Oddity Odyssey*** Kitchen Sink $9.95
Reprinting the original Michael Allred duotone Madman in trade paperback
❒***Magnus: Robot Fighter 30*** Valiant $2.25
❒***Maison Ikkoku 3*** Viz $2.95
❒***Malcolm X-Menn 1*** Parody $3.95
❒***Man of War 5*** Malibu $2.50
❒***Man-Eating Cow 7*** NEC $2.75
❒***Mangajin 28*** Mangajin $4.50
❒***Mangazine 26*** Antarctic $2.95
❒***Mantra 2*** Malibu/Ultraverse $1.95
❒***Married With Children: Quantum Creep 1*** Now $1.95
❒***Marvel Age 129*** 8/19 Marvel $1.25
❒***Marvel Comics Presents 138*** 8/5 Marvel $1.50
❒***Marvel Comics Presents 139*** 8/19 Marvel $1.50
❒***Marvel Hero Cap Sets 1*** Marvel $3.99
A new series of POGs feature Marvel heroes
❒***Marvel Super-Heroes 15*** 8/12 Marvel $2.75
❒***Marvel Tales 278*** 8/19 Marvel $1.25
❒***Max Brewster: The Universal Soldier 3*** Fleetway/Quality $2.95
❒***Maxx 6*** Image $1.95
❒***Megalith 5*** Continuity $2.50
❒***Meteor Man 3*** 8/26 Marvel $1.25
❒***Midnight Sons IUnlimited 3*** 8/19 Marvel $3.95
❒***Mighty Magnor 4*** Malibu $1.95
❒***Mighty Mites 3*** Continum $1.75

❒***Monkey Wrench 0*** Adhesive $2.75
❒***Morbius 14*** 8/19 Marvel $1.75
❒***Morbius Revisited 3*** 8/12 Marvel $1.95
❒***Morrigan 2*** Dimension X $2.75
❒***Mr. T & the T-Force 3*** Now $1.95
❒***Ms. Mystic Vol 3 #2*** Continuity $2.50



❒***Muppet Babies 3*** Harvey $1.50
❒***Musings 2*** Calliope $3.95
❒***Mythfits 1*** Heroic $2.95
❒***Namor 43*** 8/5 Marvel $1.25
❒***Naughty Bits 10*** Fantagraphics $2.50
❒***Necroscope Book II 1: Wamphyri*** Malibu $2.95
Adapting the second book in Brian Lumley's Necroscope series
❒***Negative Burn: An Anthology 2*** Caliber $2.95
Joe Pruett edits this anthology featuring Brian Bolland's Mr. Mamoulian and more
❒***New Heroes Portfolio*** SQP $50
❒***New Titans 102*** 8/26 DC $1.75
❒***New Warriors 40*** 8/26 Marvel $2.25/$1.25
❒***New World Order 4*** Blazer $2.50
❒***Night Thrashser 3*** 8/12 Marvel $1.75
❒***Nightstalkers 12*** 8/5 Marvel $1.75
❒***Ninja High School In Color 10*** Eternity $1.95
❒***No Hope 2*** Slave Labor $2.95
❒***Nomad 18*** 8/5 Marvel $1.75
❒***Official Zen Intergalactic Ninja Sourcebook*** Parody $3.50
❒***Original Ghost Rider 16*** 8/5 Marvel $1.75
❒***Otto Space 3*** Manifest Destiny $2
❒***Overstreet Comic Book Marketplace 5*** Overstreet $3.95
❒***Pal-Yat-Chee 1*** Adhesive $2.50
❒***Peepshow 5*** D&Q $2.95
❒***Phantom of Fear City 3*** Claypool $2.50
❒***Pink Panther 2*** Harvey $1.50
❒***Pixy Junket 2*** Viz $2.75
❒***Plasm 1*** Defiant $2.95
Defiant's first comic features a strange organic world where life is almost meaningless because everything is alive! Jim Shooter, David Lapham, and Janet Jackson kick off the Defiant Universe with this intriguing new series—A CSN Hot Pick
❒***Plastron Cafe 5*** Mirage $2.25
❒***Previews Vol 3 #8*** DCD $2
Find out what's coming up in October
❒***Prime 3*** Malibu/Ultraverse $1.95
❒***Protectors 12*** Malibu $2.50
❒***Prototype 1*** Malibu/Ultraverse $1.95
The first versionof the armored supersuit was a failure... but Jimmy Ruiz, the second Prototype, is bug-free... isn't he? Len Strzewski, Tom Mason, David Ammerman, and James Pascoe introduce this new Ulltraverse hero—A CSN Hot Pick
❒***Psychonauts 1*** 8/12 Marvel $4.95
❒***Punisher Back To School Special 2*** 8/26 Marvel $2.95
❒***Punisher 83*** 8/19 Marvel $1.25
❒***Punisher 2099 6*** 8/26 Marvel $1.25
❒***Punisher Annual 6*** 8/19 Marvel $2.95
❒***Punisher War Zone 20*** 8/12 Marvel $1.75
❒***Punk Origin Special 1*** Absolute $2.95/$4.95
❒***Purge 2*** Ania $1.95
❒***Quantum Creep 1*** Parody $3.95

AUGUST CHECKLIST

❒***Quasar 51*** 8/12 Marvel $1.25
❒***Ragman: Cry of the Dead 3*** 8/26 DC $1.75
❒***Rai & the Future Force 15*** Valiant $2.25
❒***Ralph Snart Adventures 4*** Now $2.50
❒***Ranma 1/2 Part 2 #8*** Viz $2.95
❒***Ratman: Dark Circle 4*** Comico $2.50
❒***Ravage 2099 11*** 8/12 Marvel $1.25
❒***Ray Bradbury Comics 4*** Topps $2.95
❒***Realm 5*** Caliber $2.95
❒***Realm of the Dead 1*** Caliber $2.95
Crossover series merging the universes of Deadworld and the Realm
❒***Red Bear 1*** Mantis $1.95
❒***Reign of the Supermen T-Shirts*** 8/12 Graphitti/DC $15.95@
Get 'em while the Supermen are still around!
❒***Reiki Warriors 2*** Heroic $2.95
❒***Ren & Stimpy 11*** 8/5 Marvel $1.75
❒***Rescueman: The Demon Hunter 2*** Brainstorm $2.95
❒***Richie Rich 17*** Harvey $1.50
❒***Richie Rich Money World Digest 8*** Harvey $1.75
❒***Robotech II: The Sentinels Book III 2*** Eternity $2.50
❒***Robotech: Invid War 16*** Eternity $2.50
❒***Robotech: Return to Macross 6*** Eternity $2.50
❒***Rock N Roll Comics 64*** Revolutionary $2.50
❒***Rock N Roll Funnies 1*** Revolutionary $2.50

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❒***Sabretooth 3*** 8/12 Marvel $2.95
❒***Saint Sinner 1*** 8/5 Razorline/Marvel $2.50
❒***Sally Forth 1*** Eros $2.95
Featuring mature material by Wally Wood
❒***Samuree Volume 2 #2*** Continuity $2.50
❒***Sanctuary Part II 4*** Viz $4.95
❒***Sandman 54*** 8/26 Vertigo/DC $1.95
❒***Sandman Mystery Theatre 7*** 8/19 Vertigo/DC $1.95
❒***Sandman: Game of You TPB*** 8/12 DC $19.95
❒***Savage Blood 1*** London Night $2.95
❒***Savage Dragon 3*** Image $1.95
❒***Savage Sword of Conan 214*** 8/12 Marvel $2.25
❒***Scarlett 9*** 8/5 DC $1.75
❒***Scavengers 2*** Triumphant $2.50
❒***Scott Saavedra's Java Town 2*** Slave Labor $2.95
❒***Screwtape Letters*** Marvel $9.99
❒***Second Life of Dr. Mirage 1*** Valiant $2.50
When Master Darque kills a parapsychologist, he doesn't realize that he's helping to create his nemesis, Dr. Mirage in this new ongoing series by Bob Layton, Bernard Chang, and Ken Branch—A CSN Hot Pick
❒***Secret City Saga 4*** Topps $2.95
❒***Secret Defenders 8*** 8/12 Marvel $1.75
❒***Secret Weapons 3*** Valiant $2.25
❒***Shade the Changing Man 40*** 8/19 Vertigo/DC $1.95
❒***Shadowhawk II 3*** Image $2.95
❒***Shadowman 19*** Valiant $2.50
❒***Shaman's Tears 4*** Image $1.95
❒***Shanda the Panda 2*** Antarctic $2.50
❒***She-Hulk 56*** 8/5 Marvel $1.75
❒***Sherlock Holmes: Tales of Mystery & Suspense 5*** Northstar $2.95
❒***Silent Mobius Part 4 #2*** Viz $2.75
❒***Silver Sable 17*** 8/12 Marvel $1.25
❒***Silver Surfer Annual 6*** 8/5 Marvel $2.95
❒***Sin City Ltd. Edition HC*** 8/12 Dark Horse $79.95
Signed and numbered hardcover edition of Frank Miller's noir hit
❒***Slaine the Horned God 2*** Fleetway/Quality $2.95
❒***Sleepwalker 29*** 8/12 Marvel $1.25
❒***Snake Eyes III*** Fantagraphics $9.95
❒***Solar, Man of the Atom 27*** Valiant $2.25
❒***Spawn POGs*** Eclipse $2/pack
A licensed milk-cap series featuring Todd McFarlane's famous creation
❒***Spectacular Spider-Man 205*** 8/26 Marvel $1.25
❒***Spectre 11*** 8/19 DC $1.75
❒***Spider-Man 39*** 8/19 Marvel $1.75
❒***Spider-Man 2099 12*** 8/5 Marvel $1.25
❒***Spider-Man Classics 7*** 8/5 Marvel $1.25
❒***Splatter Annual 1*** Northstar $4.95
❒***Spyke 4*** 8/19 Marvel $1.95
❒***Star Trek 53*** 8/19 DC $1.75
❒***Star Trek: Deep Space Nine 1*** Malibu $2.50
Mike Barr and Gordon Purcell kick off this new ongoing series based on the third successful Star Trek television series—a CSN Hot Pick
❒***Star Trek Official Fan Club magazine 93*** STFC $2.50
❒***Star Trek: The Next Generation 51*** 8/19 DC $1.75
❒***Star Wars UK 8*** 8/12 Dark Horse $2.95
❒***Star Wars UK 9*** 8/26 Dark Horse $2.95
❒***Starlog 15*** Starlog $4.95
❒***Static 4*** 8/5 Milestone/DC $1.50
❒***Steel Harbor Week One: Barb Wire*** 8/12 Dark Horse $1
❒***Steel Harbor Week Two: The Machine*** 8/19 Dark Horse $1
❒***Steel Harbor Week Three: Wolf Gang*** 8/26 Dark Horse $1
❒***Stiff Black Kiss GN*** Viz $24.95
❒***Sting of the Green Hornet TPB*** Now $12.95
❒***Strange Combat Tales 1*** 8/26 Marvel $2.50
❒***Strangers 3*** Malibu/Ultraverse $1.95
❒***Streets 1*** 8/26 DC $4.95
❒***Strontium Bitch 2*** Fleetway/quality $2.95
❒***Stryke Force 1*** Image $2.50
❒***Stupid 2*** Image $1.95
❒***Stupid Heroes 1*** Mirage $2.75
A dementia unique to superheroes leaves some mentally incapacitated—and turns others into deadly paranoiacs
❒***Super Soldiers 7*** 8/19 Marvel $1.75
❒***Superman 82*** 8/26 DC $3.50/$2
❒***Superman Temporary Tattoos*** 8/26 DC $3.95
❒***Superman: The Man of Steel 26*** 8/19 DC $1.50
❒***Superpatriot 1*** Image $1.95
Keith Giffen and Dave Johnson produce this high-tension spinoff from Erik Larsen's Savage Dragon—a CSN Hot Pick
❒***Supreme 5*** Image $1.95
❒***Tales From the Edge 2*** Vanguard $2.95
❒***Tales of Lethargy 1*** Alpha $2.50
❒***Tales of the Beanworld 20*** Eclipse $2.50
❒***Tank Girl II 3*** 8/19 Dark Horse $2.50
❒***Tarzan Volume 4 HC*** NBM $35
❒***Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 62*** Mirage $2.25
❒***TeenAgents 1*** Topps $2.95
Kirby-created series by Kurt Busiek and James Fry
❒***Thor Corps 2*** 8/5 Marvel $1.75
❒***Thunderstrike 1*** 8/5 Marvel $2.95
While Thor's out there patrolling the cosmos, Thunderstrike holds down the fort back home in this new ongoing series by Tom DeFalco and Ron Frenz—a CSN Hot Pick
❒***Tigers of Terra Color Special 1*** Antarctic $2.95
❒***TMNT Presents: Merdude & Mondo Gecko 2*** Archie $1.25
❒***Tom & Jerry 10*** Harvey $1.50
❒***Tomorrow Man 1*** Antarctic $2.95
❒***Trencher 4*** Image $1.95
❒***Turok: Dinosaur Hunter 5*** Valiant $2.50
❒***Twilight X 3*** Antarctic $2.50
❒***Twilight Zone 6*** Now $2.50
❒***Two-Fisted Tales 5*** EC $2
❒***Ultra-Klutz 10*** Parody $3.95
❒***Ultra-Monthly Magazine 3*** Malibu/ Ultraverse
❒***UN Force 8*** Caliber $2.95
❒***UN Force Files 4*** Caliber $2.95
❒***Uncanny X-Men 305*** 8/5 Marvel $1.25
❒***Uncle Scrooge Adventures 23*** Gladstone $2.95
❒***Universal Monsters: Creature From the Black Lagoon*** 8/26 Dark Horse $4.95
Steve Moncuse, Art Adams, and Terry Austin adapt this classic Universal film to comics in this prestige-format edition—a CSN Hot Pick
❒***Up & Coming*** Styx $1.50
Find out what's coming up in October
❒***Valeria the She-Bat 4*** Continuity $2.50
Guest-starring Spawn—a CSN Hot Pick
❒***Valor 12*** 8/19 DC $1.25
❒***Vampirella 10*** Harris $2.95
❒***Vault of Horror 5*** EC $2
❒***Vault of Screaming Horror 1*** Fantaco $3.50
❒***Venus Wars II 15*** 8/19 Dark Horse $2.50
❒***Veronica's Passport Digest 2*** Archie $1.50
❒***Version 2.1*** 8/26 Dark Horse $2.50
❒***Vietnam Journal: Bloodbath at Khe Sanh 4*** Apple $2.75
❒***Vixen Warrior Diaries 2*** Raging Rhino $2.95
❒***Vixen Wars 7*** Raging Rhino $2.95
❒***Vortex 1*** Hall of Heroes $2.50
❒***War Against Crime/Crime Patrol Set*** EC $130.00
Deluxe hardcover slipcased edition reprinting early EC precursors
❒***Warlock & the Infinity Watch 21*** 8/19 Marvel $1.75
❒***Warlock Chronicles 4*** 8/5 Marvel $2
❒***Web of Spider-Man 105*** 8/5 marvel $1.25

❒***Weird Fantasy 5*** EC $2
❒***Wendy 12*** Harvey $1.50
❒***What If? 54*** 8/19 Marvel $1.25
❒***Wiindows 9*** Cult $2.50
❒***Wild Thing 7*** 8/12 Marvel $1.75
❒***WildCATs Trilogy 3*** Image $1.95
❒***WildCATs Yearbook 1*** Image $3.50
Void senses that a new Gifted One is about to be born—and that a Daemonite intends to possess his body!
❒***Wildlife 3*** Antarctic $2.50
❒***William Shatner's Tekworld 14*** 8/26 Marvel $1.75
❒***Wizard 25*** Wizard $3.95
❒***Wolverine 74*** 8/12 Marvel $1.75
❒***Wolverine/Punisher: Damaging Evidence 1*** 8/19 Marvel $2
It's Logan Vs. Frank Castle in this new miniseries
❒***Wonder Man 26*** 8/12 Marvel $1.25
❒***Wonder Woman 79*** 8/19 DC $1.25
❒***Woody Woodpecker 9*** Harvey $1.50
❒***Wrapped In Plastic 6*** Win-Mill $3.95
The premiere Twin Peaks fan magazine
❒***X-Factor 95*** 8/12 Marvel $1.25
❒***X-Force 27*** 8/26 Marvel $1.25
❒***X-Men 25*** 8/19 Marvel $3.50
The Return of Magneto continues in this hologram-cover issue—a CSN Hot Pick
❒***X-Men 2099 1*** 8/19 Marvel $1.75
A century later, and the Marvel Universe faces the same anti-mutant bias as always in this new 2099 series by John Francis Moore and Ron Lim—A CSN Hot Pick
❒***X-Men 9: Milestone Edition*** 8/5 Marvel $2.95
❒***X-Men Adventures 12*** 8/12 Marvel $1.25
❒***X-Men Annual 2*** 8/12 Marvel $2.95
❒***X-Men Poster Magazine 2*** 8/19 Marvel $4.95
❒***X-Men: All-New, All-Different Masterworks Volume One*** 8/26 Marvel $12.95
Reprinting the first issues of the new X-Men
❒***X-O Manowar 22*** Valiant $2.25
❒***Xenotech 1*** Mirage/Next $2.75
Michael Dooney introduces a new superteam that protects Earth from interdimensional attack
❒***Yogi Bear 5*** Harvey $1.50
❒***Zamindar 2*** Innovation $2.50
❒***Zatanna 4*** 8/26 DC $1.95
❒***Zen, Intergalacctic Ninja: Alternity Saga 2*** Parody $2.95
❒***Zenith Phase One: Book Three*** Fleetway/Quality $1.95
❒***Zoot 4*** Fantagraphics $2.50

Last Week *CSN* featured an interview with Richard Howell & the CSN Charts.

Next Week *CSN* will feature the August Hot Picks.

COMIC SHOP NEWS

Miss a Week and You Miss a Lot!

Have you seen anything in this issue of ***Comic Shop News*** that you can't live without? Make sure you don't miss it; clip this handy coupon and write down the things that you want your comics shop owner to be sure to get for you!

Name_____Phone _____

I gotta have 'em! Please reserve for me the following items mentioned in ***Comic Shop News!***

_____

_____

_____

Be sure to give this to your retailer. Do not send it to ***CSN!*** Your comics shop will make every effort to get the items you want; some items may require a down payment before your shop owner can get them for you; be sure to ask!

MARVEL HOT PICKS

Saint Sinner™ & © 1993 Clive Barker

SAINT SINNER # 2

Clive Barker's RAZORLINE super hero series takes off as Philip returns home wanted for murder!

AVENGERS WEST COAST # 100

It's Mephisto vs. the Avengers West Coast in this 64-page, red foil-embossed milestone issue!

DAREDEVIL # 322

Part 3 of the "Fall from Grace." DD battles DEATHLOK's Seige and Garrett as we near the Man without Fear's 30th Anniversary in #325!

Sachs & Violens™ & © 1993 Peter David & George Perez

SACHS & VIOLENS # 1

Peter David and George Perez team up for a HEAVY HITTER that premieres with a multi-level embossed cover and bound-in trading card!

AVENGERS ANNIVERSARY MAGAZINE

Learn more about the Avengers in this 48-page magazine, which sports a cover that lines up with the X-MEN ANNIVERSARY MAGAZINE to form a poster!

DARKHAWK # 33

Darkhawk learns he's got more powers, but will they be enough to stop the relentless new villain, Mako?

MARVEL COMICS

MARVEL COMICS SHIPPING THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 7TH

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COMIC SHOP NEWS™

SPOTLIGHT ON VALIANT

A Valiant Histrory

Valiant Comics is one of the hottest companies in the comics field today, but everyone has their humble origins—and their backgrounds. To start with, Valiant Comics is actually part of Voyager Communications, a larger company that has holdings in several fields, most of them existing long before anyone had ever heard of Valiant Comics.

The comics end of Voyager came about in 1989 when they began to publish a line based on the popular Nintendo Entertainment System... but those were only the foundation for what would come. The first comic to be published after the Nintendo line was ***Magnus: Robot Fighter*** in late 1989. ***Magnus*** was the revival of a popular character who originally saw print under the Gold Key banner in the 1960's and 70's. There were some initial concerns about Valiant choosing to publish what was, to many collectors, an obscure character at the time, those fear subsided when the first issue hit the stands. The sales of ***Magnus***, under the helm of writer Jim Shooter and artists David Lapham and Bob Layton were stronger than most stores could anticipate—and the critical acclaim was even stronger still. The first four-part *Steel Nation* storyline reintroduced everyone to ***Magnus***, when that storyline was over, Valiant chose to reprint several of the early Russ Manning issues of ***Magnus*** that were originally published by Gold Key in order to let readers get a feel for the past from which Valiant would grow. And did they grow...

The second title that Valiant published was ***Solar: Man of the Atom***. This, too, was a revival of a Gold Key title, ***Dr. Solar***. The people who thought that Valiant went to extremes to revitalize ***Magnus*** were in for a real shock with ***Solar***; though it kept the same basic precepts intact, ***Solar*** recreated the title character drastically. Thanks to the guiding hand of the mega-talented Barry Windsor-Smith and, again, Jim Shooter, Solar quickly rose in popularity to surpass his futuristic companion, ***Magnus***. ***Solar*** also featured something unique: a comic within a comic. Barry Windsor-Smith created a ten-part origin story that was serialized in the centerfold of each issue of ***Solar***, that when complete, would feature the single largest panel ever done for comics, and would end the origin of Solar. When the tenth issue came out with its striking all-black cover, it disappeared almost overnight from comic shops everywhere. This started something big for ***Solar***, not to mention set the stage for bigger things to come.

The next two books from Valiant were both original creations: ***X-O Manowar*** and ***Rai***. ***X-O*** was the creation of Bob Layton, who was already well known for his work on another armored character—***Iron Man***. ***X-O,*** which featured an intriguing amalgam of science fiction and barbaric adventure, was another success, with fans of Layton's work anxiously wanting to see what he was up to next. ***Rai*** was a spin-off from ***Magnus***, where he originally appeared in a back-up story showing what life was like in other places than North-Am—specifically the island state of Japan. While well received, ***Rai*** didn't have the same initial success that it's originator enjoyed.

The next two books from Valiant were also original creations: ***Harbinger*** and ***Shadowman***. ***Shadowman*** was the creation of popular writer David Michelinie, best known for his recent work on ***Amazing Spider-Man***. ***Shadowman*** took a different direction for Valiant, showing the darker side of the Valiant universe on a much more personal level, set to the backdrop of the city of New Orleans, and the Jazz music that the title character loved. Like ***Rai***, ***Shadowman*** was not initially well received, but Valiant, true to its name, refused to give up.

Harbinger was the book that would surprise everyone, however. Seemingly coming out of nowhere, the popularity of ***Harbinger*** skyrocketed to the point where the first issue of this book is now going for well over a hundred dollars in mint condition. One of the reasons for ***Harbinger's*** sudden rise was the presence of a coupon promotion in the first six issues that entitled you, when redeemed, to receive a special copy of ***Harbinger #0***, a comic that would not be available on the newstands. But it had a little help...

Unity, the magnificent eighteen part storyline that ran through all of the Valiant universe, solidifying it and connecting it completely, was the lynchpin that secured Valiant's spot in the comics world. This series combined some of the best talents in the industry—names like Frank Miller, Walt Simonson, Barry Windsor-Smith, and the primary writer of the series, Jim Shooter. ***Unity*** brought attention to the entire Valiant line, due in part to the successful idea of having the first part of the series available to anyone who wanted it in a special sixteen-page "bookend" comic—absolutely free. Drawing readers into the story, ***Unity*** then went through each of the Valiant books, which were joined by two new titles: ***Archer and Armstrong*** and ***The Eternal Warrior***. It ended in another sixteen-page comic that capped off the entire story, and locked fans into a series fo great entertainment.

After ***Unity***, Valiant flourished. The sales of all of their books increased dramatically, and the demand for back-issues went through the roof. With the growth in the company, Valiant began to publish more and more titles: ***H.A.R.D. Corps***, ***Bloodshot***, ***Turok: Dinosaur Hunter***, and a revised version of the ***Rai*** comic, ***Rai and the Future Force***.

Valiant also began a popular promotional incentive, with the start of the Gold Logo plan. This plan let readers of the Valiant books get a chance to acquire a special limited version of one of Valiant's titles by doing something that was considered above and beyond the call of promoting the Valiant line. It's an incentive program that remains active today, with as many as five-hundred incentive books being shipped each week.

Now, Valiant has some of the most popular comics published by any company, with plans for many more to come. The upcoming ***Deathmate*** mini-series that will cross the Valiant universe with the Image universe is considered *the* big event of 1993.

Valiant has risen to take its place among the so called "big-boys" of comics. Valiant recently won the Gem award from Diamond Comics for being the publisher of the year, beating out companies like Marvel, DC, and Image. And the best part is, they're still only babies relatvilye speaking, having published books for less than five years. It gives us something to look forward to when they grow up, huh?...

by Brett Brooks

Valiant's Vision for the Future

For a little more than two years now, Valiant has helped to reshape the world of comics with a cohesive, interrelated universe that was built on good writing and solid, quality artwork. Any fan who thinks that Valiant's best accomplishments are in the past, though, will need to do a little rethinking once they hear about all the exciting things on line for Valiant later this year.

July

Tim Truman takes over as writer on ***Turok Dinosaur Hunter*** beginning with the fourth issue; he is joined by artist Rags Morales for his first three-issue story arc as he reveals the fate of Andar, Turok's long-time companion. Truman's abiding interest in Native American heritage is a major facet of his Turok storylines.

In a three-issue story arc beginning this month in ***X-O Manowar #31***, Aric leaves for South America and puts Randy in charge of the X-O ring. When trouble erupts, Randy is forced to become X-O for a time... but the change is far from permanent, since Aric will eventually return.

August

The Secret Life of Dr. Mirage, a new title by Bob Layton, Bernard Chang, Ken Branch, and Maurice Fontenot, introduces a hero who will serve as a foil to the villainous Master Darque, perhaps the most popular nemesis in the Valiant Universe. When Master Darque decides to eliminate a particularly troublesome parapsychologist, he inadvertently creates an enemy who can't be stopped even by death. This is a superhero comic with a metaphysical slant.

Aerosmith becomes a part of the Valiant Universe this summer. No, Aerosmith isn't a new superhero; Aerosmith is a musical group led by singer Steven Tyler, and you've probably heard of them if you've ever listened to FM radio in the past decade or so. They'll be appearing in a unique guest-starring role in ***Shadowman #19***.

September

Mike Vosburg, the popular artist who is currently writing and illustrating ***Offcastes,*** one of Epic's Heavy Hitters titles, becomes the new artist on ***Archer & Armstrong*** beginning with ***Archer & Armstrong #17***.

The ***Rai Trade Paperback*** will reprint ***Rai #s 1-4*** (the rarest Valiant back issues), making these books available to fans who discovered Rai through the current ***Rai & the Future Force*** series. As a special bonus, this trade paperback will be polybagged along with a special expanded edition of ***Rai #0***.

October

Tim Truman becomes the writer and the penciller of ***Turok Dinosaur Hunter*** for a three-issue story arc that begins this month.

Harbinger #25, a key issue in the Harbinger saga, presents the final showdown between Sting and Harada; the aftermath of this epic conflict will introduce a new direction for ***Harbinger.***

November

Ninjak, the popular martial-arts hero introduced in ***Bloodshot #6,*** graduates to his own title this month.

Late '93

Valiant will kick off its Yearbook line with the ***Eternal Warrior Yearbook***, a 48-page special issue that pits Gilad against a Geomancer-like being who intends to punish the Eternal Warrior for all the suffering he has caused. This special issue is produced by Dave DeVries and Glenn Lumsden, popular Australian creators known to American fans for their superhero series ***The Southern Squadron***.

Magnus Robot Fighter Yearbook #1 features a 48-page story written by Mike Baron (the new writer of ***Archer & Armstrong***) and illustrated by Paul Smith, the fan-favorite former ***X-Men*** artist whose work can be seen in DC's upcoming prestige-format Golden Age limited series.

Early '94

Solar: Destroyer, also referred to under the working title of ***Solar, God of War*** (neither title is final yet), is a three-issue miniseries that follows the split-persona Solar as he sets out on a quest to the homeworld of the Spider Aliens and destroy them once and for all.

Timewalker is a new limited series starring Ivar, Armstrong's brother; the series will emphasize his time-hopping adventures, melding science fiction, high-action adventure, and subtle humor in an ongoing series that'll have a strong appeal to ***Archer & Armstrong*** fans.

Magnus/Nexus is a unique crossover limited series created by Mike Baron and Steve Rude, the acclaimed creators of Nexus. This is a real labor of love for Baron and Rude, who are avid fans of ***Magnus;*** they're bringing their expertise in futuristic sf-adventure to play in this thought-provoking miniseries.

COMIC SHOP NEWS™
From Your Friendly Neighborhood Comics Outlet
Printed on 100% Recycled Newsprint

Bob Layton

by Cliff Biggers

Bob Layton is the guiding force at Valiant Comics; as the company's editor-in-chief, he oversees the direction of the entire line, ensuring that Valiant delivers the same quality books that have helped make the company such a fan-favorite. Alas, the demands on the time of Bob Layton, Editor-In-Chief, mean that fans see all too little of Bob Layton, Illustrator, which is a shame, because before he assumed his current position at Valiant, he produced exciting, dynamic artwork for Marvel and other companies in those pre-Valiant days. Somehow, Bob found time to squeeze an hour or so out of his busy summer schedule to talk with CSN about Deathmate, Valiant's future plans, and more.

Valiant was closely associated with Jim Shooter initially, but you've been involved in the company since the beginning, right?

Absolutely. For the last year, I've been the editor-in-chief of Valiant; regardless of the public perception, I've been spearheading this company. I'm a partner in this business; I'm not just a creative person hired here. A lot of people thought Valiant was just Jim or Barry, but that's not really correct, and we've proven that clearly in the year plus that he's been gone. I'm the editor-in-chief here, and I'm enjoying it very, very much. Of course, that means that my career as an illustrator is just about over, to say the least...

I realized when I was inking Deathmate how really difficult it was; that's why I had to lock myself in a hotel room. I'm really interrupted here about every ninety seconds. As popular as Valiant is and as fast as we're growing, the demands of editor-in-chief make for a sixteen-hour-a-day job. The demands are such that I have very little time left. The days where I can sit down and ink a book are over. I'll still do covers and things like that from time to time, but my days of just sitting down and inking books are pretty much gone.

As it turns out, I do this fairly well. I've had twenty years in the business this year, and this is the next evolution for me. This is what I do now, and I don't regret that; I love my job—it's the best job in the world. I have the greatest team in the world here: Knob Row, my production guys,Kevin and Mark, Steve and Jon, everybody—we've captured lightning in a bottle!...

There's nobody really teaching out there at the other companies. They look at guys' portfolios, but they don't know what they're looking at. Half the guys here were passed over at the other companies. I look beyond what's there on the paper and see what kind of thinking the guy is doing; that's something you can't teach artists—to use their heads and to think like a storyteller. In the case of Bernard Chang or Sean Chen or Joe St. Pierre—they made the rounds and people looked at their stuff and they weren't quite there, so people passed them by. I know you can teach a guy how to use his hands better, how to draw a little better; these guys are storytellers, they have tremendous intellects, and they apply that to their work. Part of what Valiant is is a school, a training ground for a lot of these guys to learn their craft; I really don't know any other company that's doing that.

Deathmate is perhaps the most exciting crossover concept in the history of comics; can you tell us how it came about and how it's developing?

Things are going really well with ***Deathmate;*** We had a little snag with the ***Prologue*** because of the logistics; it was just best for me to go out and ink my part of the book there so that we could turn it around quick enough to make the deadline. We've succeeded in doing that.

Basically, this ***Prologue*** will set up the amalgamated universe where the Valiant and the Image Universes combine with a new history—a new everything, basically. In this new world, you'll find their characters and our characters dramatically altered. It was a chance for us to take everything in a different direction entirely. For instance, in our universe, Unity didn't happen and, as a result, Magnus was born into our time; Magnus's adventures are set twenty years into the future, and he's quite a different character than we've seen in his regular book. Another example is that in this universe, Maniac—the HARD Corps member who died in the first issue—didn't die. Another character died in his stead. He survives, and he's actually in the HARD Corps part of this story—the HARDCATs part, that is. We do little alternate reality stuff like that throughout the series. The artwork on it is progressing really nicely and everything should be out on time.

The concept of ***Deathmate*** was a joint effort. It came about when Jim and Rob and Marc and Jon Hartz and Steve Massarsky and I met in Kansas City last year; we had a little summit meeting that went on until four in the morning, discussing the possibilities of all this stuff. It was an exciting time, and it was during those meetings that we proposed doing it in this fashion. I don't think that any one of us can take credit for the concept; it was a group effort all the way.

Jim Lee and I were talking about this when I was out there; we were saying that it's really historical in terms of this industry in a lot of ways. Not only do we create this alternate reality for both of our characters to exist in—and it's a feasible alternate reality—but it isn't just a make-believe story, but it actually happens in these Universes. In fact, the Image guys have a character who spins off from this series who will exist in their universe after this; he's a byproduct of the ***Deathmate*** crossover. I always hate those crossovers where characters just get together and there's no reason why—like Batman meets Spider-Man because it just so happens they live in the same universe. I also like the fact that, never before in the history of this industry, has there been such a massive crossover: six parts, over the summer, the amount of pages produced all make it unprecedented.

What's interesting about it as well is that I don't think any other two companies could have done it. We don't have the bureaucracy that has to be dealt with. If I need to make a change in something or I have an idea, I can call Jim or Rob and say, "What do you think?" and that's all there is to it.

Each segment is self-contained; I'll have to credit Jon Hartz for that part. He really figured out a way that we wouldn't step on each other's toes and each of us could do what we do best and at the same time the stories could be interrelated.

Arrowsmith's Steve Tyler guest-stars in *Shadowman #19*

Secret Weapons, Valiant's new team book, is a first issue with no cover enhancements; was that an intentional decision, since the past few first issues have had enhancements?

I don't know if that's a fair statement; we did cover enhancements with ***Bloodshot*** and ***Turok,*** and we did a foldout on ***HARD Corps***—but a foldout doesn't really constitute an enhancement as it currently discussed. It's not that we charge an arm and a leg for a foldout, or that we tout it as any great deal; sometimes you just want to do a big picture.

I guess you read my editorial this month where I really left it up to our readers whether or not they want cover enhancements. I do distributors' conferences and I hear people saying that everyone else is doing cover enhancements every other week; they ask, "Why are you guys doing this kind of stuff?" We're not; we're really looking for state-of-the-art technology that improves the experience for the consumer. I'm not using cover enhancements to cover up a book that I think needs help or something like that. I'm just trying to create a tremendous package, especially for the first issue.

It wasn't a policy here that every first issue was going to have a cover enhancement; with ***Secret Weapons,*** the strength was in the characters and the story and everything that was going on there. There isn't going to be a cover enhancement on ***Dr. Mirage,*** either. If someone comes up to us with something that makes us say, "We've just got to do this," then we do it. Wait until you see ***X-O Manowar #0***; it's just beautiful; it's not exactly like we're putting it on something that we're trying to bolster, either. The interior art is just fabulous Joe Quesada art. The reason we do it is that we just want to create a tremendous package for our readers.

Joe St. Pierre's ***Secret Weapons*** is great, and he's progressing every issue. I really applaud the entire creative team on that book: Joe St. Pierre and Bob Wiacek and Mike Cavaliero have really done a tremendous job with it.

You've enticed a top creator, Tim Truman, to come in to work on Turok in the near future, right?

The agreement that we made with Tim Truman was for him to write the first three issues in his arc—that's ***Turok*** #s 4, 5, & 6, which is being pencilled by Rags Morales and inked by Randy Elliott—and then Tim is going to write and pencil the next three after that. Tim is a consummate professional, a terrific guy, and a hell of a musician, I might add. I'll just plug his album, ***Electrified;*** he sent me one of his special edition cassettes, and let me tell you, the man knows how to rock;—he's a great blues player, and I admire that. You know, we're a musical company up here. Tim is a tremendous talent, and I've already asked Steve Massarsky to beg and plead with him in any way, shape, or form to get him to stay on in some capacity in the future. I hope this is the beginning of a lot of nifty Tim Truman projects.

We have two new titles in the works right now that I can't give out too much information on. One is ***Ninjak;*** the best way I can describe Ninjak is as a kind of a cross between James Bond and Bruce Lee. He'll be premiering in his own series in November. The next book we have after that—it'll probably be premiering in February—is ***Timewalker,*** which is the further adventures of Ivar, Armstrong's brother. It promises to

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be a fun book as well; we have wonderful things planned for him.

I've heard about some sort of Valiant 3-D book that's in the works, too...

There's a process called Valiant Vision; it's very revolutionary. It's a process in which you can turn our regular comic books into 3-D books. We're going to put out an issue of ***Solar*** in Valiant Vision; we'll package the glasses and sell them separately. It'll look like any normal Valiant comic when you pick it up; most 3-D has that blurred effect with the red and blue, and that turns people off, but anyone who doesn't want the Valiant Vision glasses can buy this comic and it looks just like any other comic. With the glasses, though, it all goes into 3-D—and I mean incredible 3-D. This is a revolutionary process; I don't usually go in for things like this, but when they put the glasses on me and stuck a page of ***Solar*** in front of me and this thing leaped off the page, I went "Holy cow!" I was blown away by it; this is really fun, and it's like nothing I've ever seen before. It's something we're working for this fall.

Unity, Valiant's megacrossover, was a tremendous success; are there other crossovers in the works?

There are no crossovers in the works right now on a company-wide level; the nice thing about being such a close-knit family as we are is that any time that, say, Maurice Fontenot wants to do a crossover with Jorge on ***X-O,*** he just has to lean over to the next desk and say, "Hey, Jorge, I have an idea." I know Kevin Van Hook, Joe St. Pierre, and Mark Moretti have been discussing a crossover with ***Bloodshot*** and ***Eternal Warrior*** and ***Secret Weapons*** that'll be happening sometime right after this Darque Ages story. It's called Empirical Dynasty, and it involves Bloodshot and Iwatsu; it kind of resolves that whole storyline that we began in ***Bloodshot #1.*** We have the tightest-knit continuity in comics right now; we guard it very carefully and we watch over what we're doing. We try not to do gratuitous team-ups; a lot of times it just evolves as the story goes on. It seems like a logical progression to bring the Warrior in on this story, you know, because what happened before involves him in the past, or something like that. There's always a thread that someone else can pick up and go with; it's not necessarily something we sit down and calculate.

Valiant is beginning to offer posters; what other expansions are in the works?

We have the Valiant Quality Apparel line that'll be out in July; there's such a demand for Valiant T-shirts and caps and things like that... I must have been sent two dozen bootleg versions of our stuff by fans, so we thought, "To protect the quality,e'd better get something out there before everybody starts making their own." So we have our line, which'll be out there next month. There have been discussions with toy companies and various other companies; there are the Upper Deck ***Valiant Era Trading Cards*** that'll be coming out next month as well. These are beautiful, high-quality cards; we're working closely with Upper Deck on these.

The Upper Deck cards include some unseen art cards and things of that nature; what I really like, though, is that these aren't just cover repros. What it really gives the Valiant fans is a little library with story synopses on the back; it gives them some sort of continuity in terms of our titles, what happened in each issue, and so on. It's a real addition to a Valiant collection.

There are other Valiant trade paperbacks in the works. In September, we have the ***Rai*** trade paperback coming out; that'll also have a premium in it, like the ***X-O Database***. Sean Chen and I are doing an additional story that fits into the continuity of ***Rai #0***; that's included as a premium for people who buy the trade paperback. There's talk of at least two other trade paperbacks by year's end, because we want to get people to be able to read these books. We're not responsible for the high cost of back issues; this is our way of making those books available.

We're also producing the ***Valiant Reader***, which you can think of as a Valiant version of ***Soap Opera Digest.*** We want people to *read* Valiant comics; I don't want them just thrown into polybags and shoved away under the bed or something. Sometimes it tough for someone to jump in; some people may have tried ***Shadowman*** in the early issues and it may not have been their cup of tea, but ***Shadowman*** is a radically different book now. A lot of people who didn't buy ***Shadowman*** since the third issue wouldn't be aware of that; the ***Valiant Reader*** will help them understand what's gone on since then and where it's going to go in the months to come. I felt that this would be a really useful tool for readers; we want to encourage people to pick up the books and have some sort of starting point and some understanding of the continuity. I credit Jon Hartz with that; this was a brilliant idea on his part. It's a beautiful package; it has an exciting cover by Bernard Chang.

There are a couple of other projects coming up that I'm really excited about; we have a miniseries coming up later this year starring ***Solar the Destroyer,*** the spin-off character rom the regular Solar book.

There's also a two-part ***Nexus-Magnus*** crossover being worked on by Mike Baron and Steve Rude; we're really excited about that as well. Mike Baron has taken over ***Archer and Armstrong*** as well, and he's doing a tremendous job there. Mike Vosburg is joining that book as artist with ***Archer and Armstrong #17;*** Mike is a classic storyteller, and his work has really blossomed in the last few years. The quality of the work he is producing is unprecedented, and I'm looking forward to him doing the book; we've seen some preliminary stuff he's turned in, and his work is just gorgeous.

The other big project I'm excited about is ***Shadowman #0,*** which is coming up at the end of the year. Bob Hall will explain the true origin of Shadowman and the origin of the *original* Shadowman, who we haven't seen yet.

Valiant's success has been historic; I'm sure the overwhelmingly positive response has been well received.

I'd like to thank all the Valiant fans for their continued support; their response to what we've been doing is just phenomenal, and we couldn't do it without them. Everybody here is dedicated to producing great stories and great art and maintaining the level of quality that we've set for ourselves. Nobody is more enthused about this stuff than me, and I want the fans to feel the same kind of energy that we have here; I think it's contagious, and I'm really looking forward to the future.

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Jon Hartz

by Brett Brooks

Jon Hartz is one of the founding fathers of Valiant, and one of the driving forces behind their success. He is also one of those names that you read in the back of the book, or see on a name badge at a convention, but really don't know why. Jon took a few minutes o to talk with CSN about who he is, what his duties include, and what's happening at Valiant.

What is your position at Valiant?

My official title is senior vice-president. In that capacity, I oversee all of the different sales and marketing departments. What that means is that I oversee the traffic managing aspects, I oversee James Perham on the solicitations and publications, and what ads are going where—he reports to me on that--and we have some people named Brad Goldberg and Meaghan Taylor who deal with the distributors and drop-ship points and orders and fulfillment. I also deal with Fred Pierce, our manufacturing director, overseeing the art directing on things like specialty covers, deciding what we're going to do—like the ***X—O #0*** cover, and the ***Turok #1*** cover—and making sure that the creator is happy with the result. We want to get not only the marketing view point, but also the aesthetic viewpoint.

I switch hats quite a bit, so I also deal with both the art and editorial aspect. Bob Layton, Mark Morreti, Kevin VanHook and I do a lot of the plotting on the established books and any new books that we're doing. I'm going to be writing a book starting in February called ***Timewalker,*** which is the adventures of Ivar—the third brother of Gilad and Armstrong. Bob Layton and I will be plotting it and scripting it and dialoguing it together; my strength tends to be in plotting and my weakness seems to be in dialoguing, so that's where Bob is going to help me out. Beyond that—well, sometimes I color, too, so I wear a lot of different hats. Between me and Fred Pierce, we are probably the only guys who understand *all* the aspects of what goes on at Valiant—not only the art and editorial end, but also the production, the manufacturing, the sales and marketing, all of the different aspects; Fred and I are sort of operations officers at Valiant. What I want to put on my business card is "Administrative Glue."

I'm also the spokesperson who goes to all of the shows. I can talk to the retailers and the distributors about the business aspects, but I can also talk to the fans and the consumers about the art and editorial aspects of Valiant. I'm also the interface in our licensing; I keep tabs on what Upper Deck is doing with our cards, and what Planet Studios is doing with our jewelry. That's sort of it in a nutshell—though sometimes I wonder what it is that I do, too.

What's Happening in Timewalker?

It's the adventures of Ivar—he's the older brother of Gilad and Aram, though he's lived fewer years because he's been time travelling. Rather than do the traditional story where Ivar goes back in time to try and save Lincoln, we're going to try to do something else, because that other type of story has been done to death. Primarily, what we want the book to deal with is Valiant history. When we have Ivar jumping into the year 3000, we'll look at some of the events that were discussed in ***Rai #0***. We'll show how the Harbinger wars have started; in a sense, ***Rai #0*** will serve as a template for what will happen in the ***Timewalker*** series. We'll jump into the future and touch on what will happen with Bloodshot on the moon, or maybe we'll jump back into time and have an adventure with Armstrong as a pirate, or maybe we'll go into the future beyond Magnus's time and have a story with Magnus's son. We can show what happens in the Valiant universe instead of focusing on the historical aspect that usually enters into those stories. I think that it will be a lot of fun. We're trying to handle the time-travel theory a little differently so that we can have stories without having to worry about the usual time-travel paradoxes. We want to approach it from a more realistic angle.

It looks like Mike Leeke will be doing the book. That isn't definite—and I don't want to get any hopes up—but he's my first choice for the book; if we can work something out for ***H.A.R.D. Corps***, because he still loves doing that book, then hopefully we'll have him. Before his book debuts in February, though, you will be seeing Ivar pop up in other places.

You seem to like the idea of keeping the readers updated...

This comes from my background: I started as a fan of comics, and then I went into the retail aspect, and then I went into the distributor end, where I managed several warehouses, I developed a strong art background working with Neal Adams at Continuity studios—not working on comics, but working on advertising art for about six years. I also have a background in sales and marketing. One thing I feel very strongly about is that Valiant must remain very consumer friendly, retailer friendly, distributor friendly, and creator friendly; I feel that it is very important not to force the consumer into buying something that they wouldn't necessarily want to have. Valiant will never try to force consumers into buying something; for example, we will never produce a comic with two different covers on sale at the same time. That's sort of forcing a Valiant collector into buying both books. I want consumers to buy our products because they *enjoy* them and they want to buy the products, not because they feel that they are being tricked.

I also want to get new readers into our stories and into the Valiant universe. As complicated as our books and our stories get sometimes, I want to make sure that there is a way for readers to get into the stories—and that's the reason that we're doing the ***Valiant Reader.*** I'm very well aware of what some of our books are doing on the market right now; the runs were so incredibly small on those early books that many new readers can't afford to buy those issues. What we wanted to do was offer people access to what was happening in the Valiant Universe without their having to go out and spend hundreds of dollars. That was the whole concept behind the ***Valiant Era Trading Cards***, where we publish a synopsis of what happens in a book on the other side of a card that has a picture of the cover art. Because they are trading cards, and because it is a license, Upper Deck felt that there needed to be chase cards and specialty cards within the series—but the average fan can buy a a box of cards and be assured that he'll be getting a complete set of all the covers with synopsis on the back so that he can catch up; so that way, if there is some guy whose missing ***Rai # 3*** and ***#4,*** he can find out what happened in those books by reading the backs of the cards. Even the card set is relatively expensive, though; we still wanted to offer a more inexpensive way for Valiant readers to catch up on what happened before—and that's the purpose of the ***Valiant Reader.*** Frankly, the cost of the project is such that, right now, it's a toss-up as to whether we're going to break even or lose money on it, but it was never intended as a profit-oriented project. This is just a tool that allows the fan to catch up on what's going on in the Valiant universe for only 75¢. In essence, the ***Valiant Reader*** is a "bible"; it's a tool that tells you who the different characters are and how they relate to each other, and it fills in the gaps in some of the books that fans can't afford to purchase right now. That's also why we're trying to get trade paperbacks of some of these more expensive books on the market. I don't want to come out with four or five of these reprint books in one month, because it becomes a burden on the consumer's wallet. What we're going to do is spread the release out to one book every two or three months. Hopefully, over the next six months to a year, we'll be able to offer a version of the book that people can afford, but it shouldn't hurt the cost of the original release. I don't think that these are going to hurt back issue sales, but I want the readers to be able to get the material.

How has Valiant's growth affected the company?

It's like holding back a tiger by the tail. We try to plan everything out here at Valiant. Things have grown so fast that it's hard to pull back sometimes. When we first started, I did everything that involved the direct market; that included talking to retailers, doing the traffic managing, writing the solicitations, doing the mailings, and all of that stuff. Quite literally, I was packing and shipping ***Magnus #0***'s. It's kind of hard for the average retailer or consumer to realize that with all of the press that we get, and with the kind of noise that we're making in the direct market, we don"t put out a hundred and fifty books a month, and we don't have the income from that many books. We only publish twelve books, so our staff is relatively small. Of all of the major companies, I think that we have the smallest staff. As a result, everybody who works here tends to wear a lot of different hats; thank God everybody here likes each other and we can all work as a team! The hardest part is the growth aspect; we have a lot of plans as to where we want to go and what we want to do, so it's really just a question of not biting off more than we can chew. That's the biggest problem that we face: we want to do cartoons, and we want to do toy lines, and we want to do movies and games and all this kind of stuff—but if we jump into it too fast... well, that's the way that you implode. Looking back over the history of the direct market, it's very easy to see how a company can get wrapped up like that; before you know it, the company breaks apart because everybody is spread way too thin. So, we're trying to do a slow controlled growth here, and that's probably the hardest thing for us to do, *not* to add a whole bunch of titles, or *not* to start negotiating for a cartoon. We want to build slowly but surely, because we feel that if we can build a strong foundation brick by brick by brick, we'll be we're here ten years from now.

What about the Valiant Yearbooks?

This is a project that I'm really excited about. Again, this draws on Stan Lee and Jack Kirby for inspiration, because one of the things that Bob Layton and I both used to love about Marvel was their annuals. That was back when annuals were really something special. You got an extra-long story by one of the best artists in the field, and little diagrams, and background information about the characters, and it was just a great package. It was something that I used to haunt the drug stores looking for; I still remember the thrill I got when I picked up ***Fantastic Four Annual #1***. Recently, we've been getting a lot of top-name artists telling us that they would love to do a Valiant book, but they didn't have the time to do it on a regular schedule. So, we decided that, rather than use the term "annual," which retailers and fans sort of shy away from, we would create the Yearbooks. These are double-sized stories by some of the top names in the industry. They come out sporadically, depending on when the creators finish—because we told them that we wanted them to do the best job they possibly could, but we wouldn't solicit for it until it was completely done; that way, we don't put the pressure on them to

cover art for *The Sec*

hurry the work. This way, the fans aren't disappoint ed, and we get to keep up with our shipping schedule and the creator doesn't have to worry about putting a book out late. Hopefully, these will be coming out one every few months. The first one is an ***Eternal Warrior Yearbook*** by Dave DeVries and Glenn Lumsden. It's terrific looking stuff, reminiscent of Paul Gulacy or Brian Bolland. The story starts in World War I, and then jumps back to the Crusades, so it's a past story of Gilad. Dave DeVries was able to go a little more into the personality of Gilad because of the length of the story, so I think that readers will come away with a little more of a feeling of who he is. Some of the other ones that are in the works include an untold tale of Magnus by Mike Baron and Paul Smith. Some of the older readers of Magnus will remember that there is a bit of an inconsistency between issues one and two. In issue one, he is an outlaw who is being dropped off by 1-A, but by issue two, he is on the side of law and order and is very respected and loved. Well, how that came about is what this Yearbook covers. We also have a ***Solar Yearbook*** in the works; when it gets done, it will come out. We want to be able to have a nice venue for creators who don't normally do our books to be able to do something special.

Didn't you initiate the gold logo program?

Yes I did, and I'll tell you where the idea came from. One of the things that Bob Layton and I are continuously doing is remembering our background in comics,

cond Life of Doctor Mirage #2

which started with Stan Lee and Jack Kirby; when we were kids we used to read those things and that was what inspired us to get into the industry. We're always going back to Stan and Jack for inspiration. One of the things that I used to always enjoy were Stan's No-Prizes, where he would award someone who was helping Marvel or helping to promote Marvel with a No-Prize. My thought was, rather than give them No-Prizes, lets give the people who do the same for Valiant a *real* prize. That was where the whole concept began. It was something that the average Valiant fan doesn't have to have, because it's really the same book that they could buy off the stands, but it serves as a little reward for helping Valiant. I know that you see the gold logo books for sale, but I tell people that they don't have to buy them: all they have to do is do something to promote Valiant, and we'll give them something for it, something that seems to have a value.

I keep the print run on all of the gold logos very limited; we only print five thousand of any gold logo that we do. To be honest, I didn't think that we would have to continue doing them, and that after my first print run, I would have enough to last a couple of years. To date, we get about three hundred letters a week from fans or stores that are helping us promote Valiant. Quite frankly, we're pretty easy about it, too; I'll get pictures of drawings that kids have done that they have hung up at their local store, for instance. Whenever a consumer interacts with a retailer, we definitely reward them—as I said, we are sending out about three-hundred a week, and at that rate, because we only print about five thousand, I run out in about two or three months, so we continue to make new ones. I'll continue this as long as the fans want us to. As long as the fans care, and are dressing up like Shadowman and going to a convention or passing out flyers, or making window displays built around Valiant, or *anything*—one thing that I do stress though, is that I don't want anything illegal. I don't want you walking around spray-painting walls with the Valiant logo or anything. I know that other companies now are doing gold logos, but they usually tie them into a buying incentive—you can get the special edition if you buy so many copies of a given book or a particular line of books—and that's never been our criteria with the gold logo books. It's always been a nice way to say thank you to someone who helped out Valiant, and helped spread the word about Valiant.

What is the stand at Valiant on cover enhancements?

We've published, to date, two hundred- plus issues, and of those, we've published *five* enhanced covers. We did the ***Solar #10***, ***Magnus #25***, ***Bloodshot #1***, ***Turok #1***, and now ***X-O #0***. Of all of the books that we've done, only two or three percent of them have had cover enhancements. When you compare that to Marvel, who has done, I believe, five or six a week since January, we have hardly done anything. Also, when we do a cover enhancement, we try to do it to enhance the entire *package*, so we only do it when we feel we have a very strong book that we want everybody to see. Once fans get beyond the cover, they still get something great to read; we aren't doing this just to try and sell major Valiants. However, it's true that we do hear about it a lot, and we do try to remain consumer friendly, so we thought we should ask the fans whether or not they wanted to see them. In our latest Bulletin Board feature in the back of our books, we asked readers what they wanted— if they want an occasional cover enhancement, great,but if they think that they don't want it, then we won't do it. We thought that the best way to find out what our consumers want was to poll them all, and ask them. If the answer comes back that they do want to see an occasional cover enhancement, that's exactly how we would do it. We will never do four or five enhancements a week—or even four or five a month—for a number of reasons. The biggest reason is simply *control*. Any time that you do one of those cover enhancements, it requires a lot of work to follow it through to all of the processes. The ***Turok*** cover, for example, went through four separate vendors to be assembled. The ***X-O #0*** was the same way; it took months of experimentation and playing around to find the right types of material so that the book could be folded, and stitched properly. These cover enhancements take an amazing amount of time to generate, so for that reason alone I wouldn't do very many.

I think that certain characters lend themselves to it particularly well. X-O for example, was just crying to be done in some sort of metalized look. Occasionally I do enjoy doing special covers because I think that they aesthetically enhance the package—and on a marketing level, it *does* get a greater number of books into people's hands. Usually, with a cover enhancement, stores will order more, and it gives a better chance for the book to get into the hands of a wider audience for that issue. Bob and I realize, though, that you can't give just a great cover: you have to give a great story and great art on the inside.

Valiant appeals to both investors and collectors, where do you stand on those two viewpoints?

I view it the same way now as I did when I was a retailer. I almost hate to say when that was, but it was back in the mid-Seventies. Even at that time, though, I would get kids coming into the store and the first question out of there mouths was, "What's going to be worth money?" I would tell those kids then the same thing that I say now, which is that I don't have a crystal ball—I can't tell you that. I will tell you this, though: if you buy a comic because you like to *read* it, the chances are that you will find out what is most fun to read. If you're reading it, then chances are someone else is reading it, too. A good comic is a good comic, no matter what; eventually, there will be more people wanting it. So if you pick up a comic and you read it and then you take care of the book, then chances are that there will be someone else who wants that book as well. I would tell that to thirteen or fourteen year-old kids, and then they would ask me what I liked to read, and I would mention the John Byrne ***X-Men*** or some other good book, and they would pick them up and they would enjoy them—and then, almost invariably, when the kids turned seventeen or eighteen years old, they would get out of comics collecting for whatever reason. Then they would bring me their comics collection, not expecting to get money out of it, but because they needed the space or whatever—and most of them who had been reading consistently would bring me back books that, as a retailer, I was able to give them something on. They would leave perfectly happy, because they had enjoyed the books as a good read, and they got some money out of it. Then, they would go off to school or whatever, but then, almost to the kid, because they had a good feeling when they got out of comics because they hadn't looked on the hobby as the stock market, they would come back into the store and ask me what a good book was to read. Most of those kids would get out of the hobby for a couple of years, but would inevitably end up back into it.

What scares me today, is that so many kids buy the books strictly because they think that they are going to make a profit. They don't just buy a copy of the book, they buy five or ten or fifteen copies, and when they come back into the stores in a few years and the retailers tell them that they have plenty, then they are going to sour on the hobby and they won't walk back into the stores when they are in their early twenties. So, I'm a big advocate of reading the books, and enjoying them as an entertainment medium. If they gain value, *great*—but they should be enjoyed more than anything. If people want to invest in anything, then they should look at the stock market. Comics should be seen as a source of entertainment. The value is only the fudge on the ice cream.

That's the same way we feel at Valiant. We want people buying our comics for the *story*, and not buying multiple copies for investment. That gets back to the ***Valiant Reader***, where we want people to know what's happening so that they can read the current stories and enjoy them.

Kevin Vanhook

by Cliff Biggers

Kevin Vanhook is well known to fans of Valiant's Bloodshot and Solar, Man of the Atom, since he writes the monthly adventures of both heroes. He's also a busy man behind the scenes, since he's Valiant's Executive Editor as well. And if that isn't enough, he's slowly but surely plugging away at illustrating a book for Valiant as well! Like everyone involved in Valiant, Kevin is continually busy; there's a constant level of activity in the Valiant offices. Nevertheless, he took some time away from his duties to talk to CSN about his role at Valiant.

Solar has become a crucial character in the Valiant Universe. Do upcoming events focus on him as a central figure?

Solar has always played a pretty heavy role in the Valiant Universe, because in theory, we assumed that, if Solar hadn't fallen through into this universe, a lot of the strange goings on wouldn't have happened. His introduction and destruction of his Earth and the creation of the black hole triggered a lot of changes, which in turn triggered Unity, which in turn led to a lot of other occurrences. He's always had a pretty major part here, but it's becoming more focused now because he's one of the most powerful characters—if not *the* most powerful—in the Valiant Universe because of his almost godlike ability.

Some of our upcoming plans revolve around Solar; the miniseries will deal with the Destroyer persona; ***Solar the Destroyer*** is a working title, but it may not be the final title. The series will deal with him and his goal to track down the spider-alien race and destroy them at their homeworld. Meanwhile, the earth-based Solar will be blocked in his goal to be as human as possible; with all that power, it's impossible for him to be human, no matter how much he'd like to.

Since Solar is a part of Secret Weapons, do you have to plan ahead with Joe St. Pierre to coordinate the plotlines?

There's a great deal of coordination involved in ***Secret Weapons***. Geoff the Geomancer and Livewire and Stronghold are the only real continuing characters in ***Secret Weapons***; anyone else in the Valiant Universe is fair game, depending on the story. Because Solar has interacted with Geoff before, he'll be popping in and out. Joe has plans for him to become a major protagonist in ***Secret Weapons #4***; Joe does a great deal of coordination with me and with other writers to make sure everything in ***Secret Weapons*** remains true to what's happening in the other books.. The three-part "Coming of the Darque Age" story in ***Secret Weapons #1 & 2*** and ***Solar #25*** took a lot of coordination; Joe and I worked really hard to make sure that it works.

Coordination must be a bit easier with so many of the Valiant writers coming into the office on a regular schedule.

It certainly is. Joe is here on pretty much a daily basis; Maurice Fontenot and Jorge Gonzalez have tables here because they're some of our head colorists, too. They're pretty much here every day; Bob Layton has a great deal to do with all the books, but he is directly writing ***Doctor Mirage***. Jon Ostrander, Bob Hall, David, and Mike Baron are the only writers who are sort of "out of house." They make an effort to coordinate their stories with everyone else's, though.

We had a writer's conference recently; we set down a six month overview clarifying where we intend to go with the books, we discussed ideas for crossovers—where characters might pop up in other titles, if it made sense, how to go about consulting with each other for the writers who aren't in Manhattan on a daily basis, and making sure that procedures are clear.

Aren't you also doing the art for an upcoming Valiant book?

I'm writing and penciling ***Bloodshot #0***; this is the first thing I've drawn since ***Frost: The Dying Breed*** series for Caliber. I'm enjoying drawing again, but I have very little time to do it. I'm sneaking in two pages of pencils a month; it sounds pretty deplorable in terms of scheduling, but it's about all that I can do since I'm so busy as a writer and an editor.

I'm also writing a ***Bloodshot Yearbook***, and I'm editing a handful of Yearbooks. The first Yearbook is ***Eternal Warrior***, which is a special issue by two Australian creators, Dave DeVries and Glenn Lumsden. They're quite the national heroes in Australia, where they're doing Marvel's Phantom series there. The Phantom is bigger in Australia than any superhero is. Their ***Eternal Warrior Yearbook*** is a good stand-alone story.

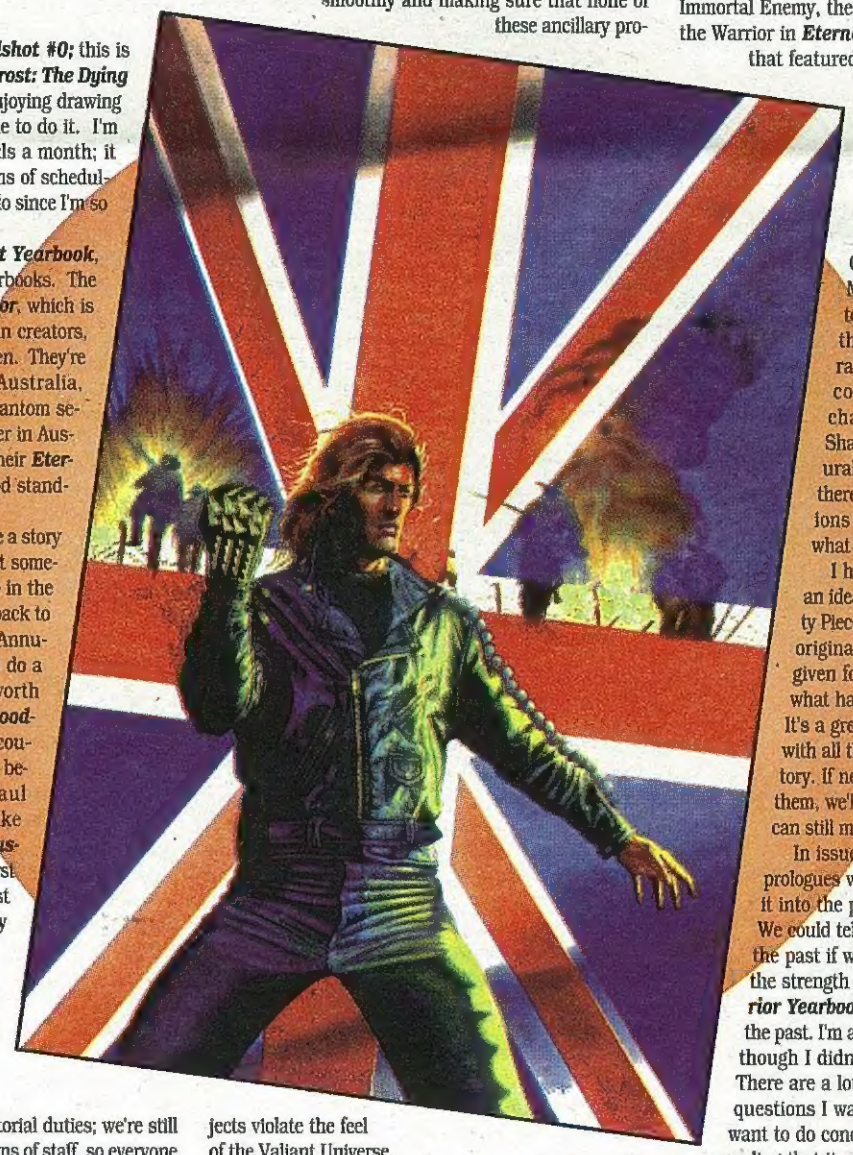
Basically, a yearbook has to be a story specifically worth telling, not just something that could have been done in the regular book. We're harkening back to the days of those early Marvel Annuals, when Stan and Jack would do a special story that was really worth reading. There'll also be the ***Bloodshot Yearbook***, a ***Magnus***—a couple of Magnus, actually. One is being done Mike Baron and Paul Smith. Another project is Mike Baron and Steve Rude's ***Magnus-Nexus*** series; I have the entire first plot and photocopies of the first twenty pages, and it's really great.

It sounds like coordinating various Valiant projects takes up a large part of your time.

It's a humongous part of my editorial duties; we're still a relatively small company in terms of staff, so everyone has a lot to do. If you consider some of the other companies like Dark Horse and Malibu, we have a small staff. Our marketing department is three or four people, for example.

I spend a great deal of time coordinating material. Unless I'm out of the office on business, every page of colored artwork crosses my desk and crosses Bob's desk. We work very hard to make sure that the continuity stays there in every book; we still make mistakes, but we work hard at keeping things coordinated.

The biggest part of my day is tied up in making sure all of the other projects go smoothly. I started out as production manager, bringing my computer skills with me. I first joined Valiant in March of '92. I introduced the bulletin page in the back of the Valiant books, and I did the ***Valiant Voice***. My duties expanded from there. Now we're doing T-shirts, cards sets, apparel, the Valiant half of the ***Deathmate*** card set, the ***Valiant Reader***—a great deal of my day is being spent supervising all those projects and making sure that they go smoothly and making sure that none of these ancillary projects violate the feel of the Valiant Universe.



I edit ***Archer and Armstrong, Magnus, Rai,*** and ***Turok***; I have hands-on involvement in every aspect of those titles. As Executive Editor, I also act as a backup man for Bob Layton to make sure we keep things on track.

You're also writing Bloodshot and Eternal Warrior, which seem to have some sort of interrelationship.

That's true. I'm excited about ***Bloodshot;*** the book has gone through some real changes. In the first few books we had a character who didn't know his past, and the reader was able to learn as he did. As it turns out, he had been a Mafia hit man and his life was changed radically. He no longer has that same kind of emotion or feeling he had in that earlier life; he really is a good guy now. The brainwashing and programming that turned him into Bloodshot had a beneficial effect on him. Bloodshot's blood is literally the blood that flows through Rai's veins in that book as well. I changed the direction of the book to something that I thought made sense all along: I had him take over the role that Warrior had held. That was a role that Gilad had held for many years, and Bloodshot has taken that over, freeing up Gilad to be protector of the world.

The book's direction has changed in that sense, and it's a change that I'm comfortable with; it's an action-adventure concept in which anything can happen. For example, I'm doing a story about a former Vietnamese tunnel rat who is now working selling drugs along the Mekong Delta in Vietnam; he's selling bad drugs and people are dying. I'm exploring more of that sort of action-adventure; the Mafia elements are hanging in the background but they aren't the primary emphasis of the book. The problem of Iwatsu will be resolved; that, too, will tie in to Joe St. Pierre's ***Secret Weapons,*** dealing with what we call Speedshots—the Bloodshot-type experiments that don't last.

The relationship with Gilad goes back before Bloodshot was ever Bloodshot. They first crossed paths in a very bad way—and that's the story I tell In ***Bloodshot #0***. I want to show the story of enemies who become two of the tightest allies in the Valiant Universe. I want to explore that more; since Bloodshot is working for Neville now, we'll see more interaction between those characters.

Eternal Warrior is a book that Mark Moretti and I have been writing; he's been plotting and I'm scripting. I'll be co--plotting it with him soon; first, he's doing a two-parter that I'm not involved with but I edited. Mark and I just finished up a three-part storyline with the Immortal Enemy, the Caldone character who plagued the Warrior in ***Eternal Warrior #4***—that's the issue that featured the first appearance of Bloodshot.

After Mark Moretti and Yvel Guichet's two-parter, we're doing some more issues that deal with the past; as it turns out, Master Darque is behind a lot of things that have been plaguing Gilad lately. I don't want to use Master Darque too much; I want to use more of his minions and get the feeling of his machinations, rather than making it a personal confrontation between the two characters. Master Darque and Shadowman are enemies, so it's natural that there'd be confrontations there but I'll continue using the minions and focusing on the results of what he's doing.

I have a story coming up based on an idea by Bob Layton; it's called "Thirty Pieces of Silver," and it deals with the original coins that Judas Iscariot was given for betraying Christ; we'll reveal what happened to those pieces of silver. It's a great story. Bob has a lot of input with all the books; he's a regular idea factory. If neither he nor I have time to write them, we'll hand them off and that way we can still make them work.

In issue four, I introduced 3 to 5 pages prologues where we tell a past story and tie it into the present story; I like that format. We could tell entire stories that take place in the past if we wanted to—but it depends on the strength of the story. The ***Eternal Warrior Yearbook*** spends a great deal of time in the past. I'm a bit of a history nut, I guess—although I didn't realize it until I started this. There are a lot of things I want to do, a lot of questions I want to answer. I have an idea I want to do concerning the Oracle of Delphi, revealing that it was the Geomancer. I don't want to explain every myth as a part of the Valiant Universe, though. Once I added a cast-off comment that Gilad said about Armstrong being Hercules; it was a joke, but some people took it literally. That was never my intention. He might have influenced some of the myths, but even that is nothing definite.

At the same time, there are some fun things you can't

resist adding, even though everyone may not get it; for instance, we have a scene where six Texas Rangers ride into an ambush... If you get it, fine; if you don't, you can still enjoy the book because it's a fun story. If you can enjoy a story on multiple levels, that's good; if you had a good gut reaction to it on first reading, but you reread it and find some little pun or some little bit that you missed the first time, then that's great. For instance, there's Bloodshot's enemy, Hadiyoshi Iwatsu: Hadiyoshi was a 15th Century Japanese emperor who restricted weapons, so I used his name because I thought it was an interesting tie-in.

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It's interesting that, in spite of all this complex continuity, it's still very easy for fans to enjoy one Valiant title without reading every other book.

That's a part of our company philosophy. It's unfair to write an epic jigsaw puzzle that requires fans to to read every book to make sense of it. If you do read all the Valiant books, you get more enjoyment out of them—but, hopefully, you can read any title and understand what's happening; the stories are self-contained and there's some feeling of resolution in each book.

You're also involved in the Valiant-Image crossover series Deathmate, aren't you?

I'm writing the Solar/Supreme in ***Deathmate Blue***, and I'm helping Bob coordinate the entire thing to make sure that our stories tie together thematically and move towards the ***Epilogue.*** If you pick up any one book, you'll get the gist of the story; you don't have to read them all—but if you *do*, you'll enjoy it a whole lot more. The books don't have to be read in any order, either; that takes the pressure off both companies to finish up each installment in a specific order. My Solar/Supreme segment is pencilled by Peter Grau, and Jimmy Palmiotti is inking it; it ties up the last of our stories and leads into the ***Epilogue*** , where Bob Layton took the ball and finished off the rest of the story, separating the two universes.

Actually, the last three chapters of ***Deathmate Blue*** are tied together; they flow right into one another. That all happened because we had three writers—Joe St. Pierre, Maurice Fontenot, and me—sitting on the couch discussing it all, so we decided to make it one big story. We did a story in three chapters that brings Solar into the situation, because he's the only one who is powerful enough to correct things.

With all the emphasis on coordination in-house, I'm sure that coordinating everything with a company on the other side of the company must have been even more demanding.

We had an 18-parter with ***Unity*** that had to ship in order; by and large, it did. This time, though, we sat down and came up with a way to do this so that you could read our installments, or theirs, or all of them, or any one of them, and it would still make sense. If you read the ***Deathmate Prologue*** and the ***Epilogue,*** you'll get the basic story, and the shared universe issues in between give us the underlying theme, moving toward the climax. I also think it's very good that the books are color coded, so that you don't have people looking just for the first issues—because they're all first issues, I guess.

Valiant has really helped bring about some significant changes in the industry...

I've been reading comics since I was eight years old; I've been working in the field professionally, off and on, for ten years, and I've seen the industry change greatly in the last couple of years. Three years ago, there was no place for a Valiant or an Image; it really was Marvel's and DC's game, with Dark Horse lagging behind there somewhere with interesting books but not a major market niche. Everything has changed now. Currently, I don't think there's a lot of patience out there for companies who ship late, or for books that don't do anything.

I've heard a lot of criticism about some comics being too episodic; there's a fine compromise between familiarity and recognizability. Creators must remain true to the idea of the character, the character's essence—but at the same time the characters have to evolve and stay fresh. I find myself struggling with that sometimes: t to end the story and figure out how my characters would change, how would they move on, how would they react psychologically to the events of the story. Readers demand some changes.

A couple of years ago, I had grown tired of comics; I wasn't buying anything. I never thought I'd see the day when I'd walk into a comic shop with twenty bucks in my pocket and walk out with twenty bucks still in my pocket, but it was happening pretty regularly. Oh, I liked Frank Miller's stuff, but it came out too infrequently; I like Alan Moore's work, but some of it was too far afield for me. It was great timing for me to fall in with Valiant and begin working here. I began co-writing with people here and I got to do mainstream stuff with a twist. It's a good place to be; there are a lot of people here who are very excited about comics. Many people here were also disenchanted with the medium in the past five years; we're trying to bring back the spirit that made us interested in comics originally. We're not trying to be Stan and Jack or Frank Miller—but we're trying to make fans as excited about Valiant as we were about Stan's and Jack's and Frank's stuff.

BARRY WINDSOR-SMITH